

DeFever Cruisers Magazine

Volume 15 Number 3

Summer 2010



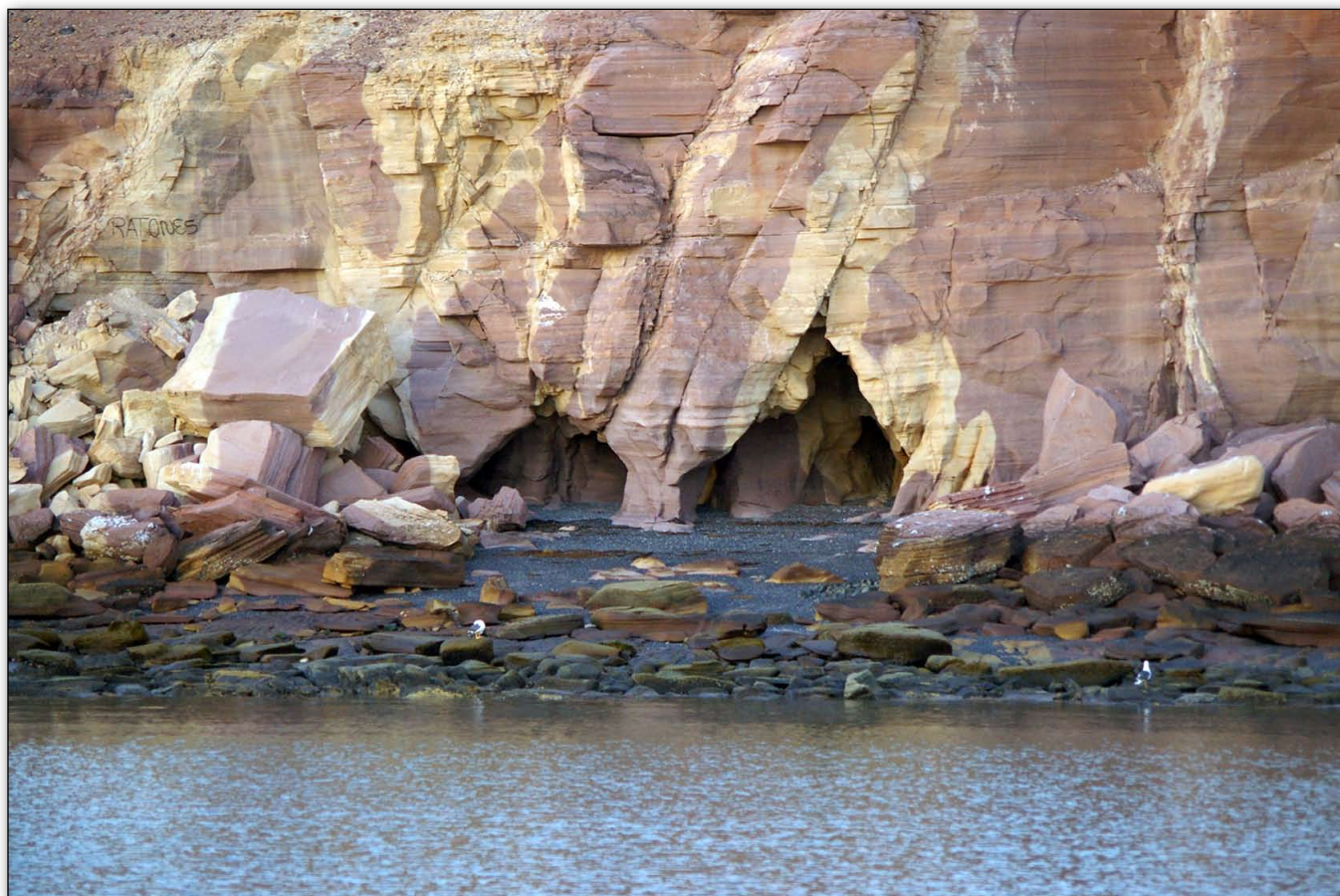
CROTHERS, Dean & Jennifer JACOBS (#390) 1970 • DF50 Wood • EMILY B Seattle, WA

The Spectacular Northern Sea of Cortez

The northern part of the Sea of Cortez is often overlooked by cruisers in Mexico. With the exception of a few hearty souls who spend the summer aboard their boats outside of the hurricane zone there, the areas north of Santa Rosalia are rarely visited. After four seasons in Mexico, including five transits of the fantastic cruising grounds between San Carlos and La Paz, we decided to venture further north to the area around the Bay of Los Angeles and the Midriff Islands.

It was late May when we left the dock in La Paz and the temperatures were starting to rise uncomfortably into the mid to high nineties. Our final destination was San Carlos, where we had a slip waiting for us in Marina Real, our summer moorage. We had heard that the weather becomes cooler as you cruise further north along the Baja side of the Sea of Cortez but we wanted to find out for ourselves.

It was difficult to pass by some of our favorite anchorages as we transited the southern part of the Sea, but we tried to stay focused as we took the fast track from La Paz to Santa Rosalia in only one week. Okay, we did manage to spend one night in Los Gatos, where magnificent red rocks reflect against the turquoise sea. And after a full moon beach party at beautiful San Juanico, we took a much needed day of rest and I had a lesson in how to prepare sushi from another cruiser.



Sea caves at Puerto Refugio

But we skipped Loreto and the great anchorages there and also passed by Conception Bay.

Santa Rosalia is a former copper mining town that was purchased by the French more than a century ago. The architecture is very different from the rest of Mexico, with tongue and groove wood siding on the older houses that was imported from the Pacific Northwest by the French. There is also a church designed by the famous Eiffel (of the Tower), which was transported across the Atlantic from Belgium and reassembled in Santa Rosalia. Unfortunately, part of the steeple was blown away during Tropical Storm Jimena last summer. More unfortunately, a main sewer line was also damaged and what appeared to be raw sewage was spilling out onto the main street at the foot of town. When the wind was right (or wrong, I guess) the smell permeated all the way to the small Singlar Marina, where we were docked.

We were able to pick up a few provisions in Santa Rosalia, did laundry, and sampled a couple of local restaurants (El Muelle has great fajitas!). Oh, and baguettes from the bakery - a remnant of the past French influence. The copper mines were depleted after World War II and the fishing industry, most recently squid, took over. However, the squid have left Santa Rosalia, along with the processing plant in the harbor due to copper that washed into the sea from the heavy rains of Jimena. The industry has since moved farther north. Instead, there is a nightclub with carnival lights blaring Mexican narco-rap across the water until midnight. It was very hot too, with the breakwater and a large fuel pier blocking the cooling sea breezes. Needless to say, we didn't linger in Santa Rosalia any longer than was necessary.

From Santa Rosalia, we cruised 75 miles north to the large, crescent shaped harbor of San Francisquito. Along the way we saw dozens of dolphins leaping above the surface. The tide was with us for the latter part of the journey and our speed, normally 7.5 knots at 1500 RPM, topped out at 10 knots. We had left at 6:30 am thinking it would take 11 hours, but along with the tidal push we also passed into a new time zone so we actually arrived about 3:00 pm. The wind was blowing from the southeast and the small inner harbor was full of boats from the Tucson Sailing Club, who had arrived at midday. So we anchored off the western sand beach and had a rocky-rolly night.



Emily B in San Pedro Bay

We passed a group of 8-10 fin whales in Salsipuedes Channel the next morning. They were lazily swimming and diving near the surface and were recognizable by their large dorsal fin. *Salsipuedes* means "leave if you can" in Spanish - a reference to the strong currents that can make passage difficult if they are against you.

Our next stop was 32 miles further north in a small bay, Puertocito Enmedio, near the tip of Punta de Las Animas. It was a lovely enclosure backed by high sedimentary peaks with rocky, guano covered islets on either end. We were enchanted by the elegant terns swooping in the air currents and diving down to the emerald green water. We later learned that they nest at nearby Isla Rasa, where one can anchor and dinghy in for a tour by the naturalists there. We'll check that out on our next trip.

There were four large fishing boats anchored outside Enmedio when we arrived. We took a sunset row in our dinghy and enjoyed the multi-hued pink and purple afterglow as the fishing boats headed out at dusk. The crews sleep during the day and do their fishing at night with bright spotlights to attract squid. The next morning, we were startled to see a coyote walking along the beach at the waterline. We lingered in this lovely spot an extra day as it provided excellent shelter from the southeast wind that came up in the afternoons and we were ready for a lay-day after our long push north.

From Puertocito Enmedio we cruised across the Bahia de Las Animas and poked our nose into some of the anchorages on the western side. There were fishing boats anchored all along the bay, fourteen of them, Dean counted, all resting up for the next night's labor. Ensenada el Alacran (Scorpion Bay) looked great for northwest wind protection, which one would need in the winter. There were several small yurts along the white sand beach, part of a luxury wilderness resort we were told. The next bay, Ensenada el Pescador (Fisherman's Bay), also had a white sand beach and promised good northwest protection inside the small island (Isla el Pescador) where there was a large sea lion colony and many pelicans lining the rocky shore.

As we headed around the western tip of the bay, Punta el Pescador, I heard the welcome whirring sound of the fishing reel. "Fish on!" I shouted, as Dean pulled back the throttle of the boat and shifted into neutral. We rushed to the stern and

Dean started reeling in the line as I grabbed the net. It was a beautiful yellowtail, our first fish of the season, the perfect size for lunch. We anchored around the corner in Ensenada el Quemado and soon after were having a delicious meal of fish cooked Veracruz style with fresh vegetables.

At Ensenada el Quemado (Burned Bay), we tucked into the southeast corner to anchor in the shelter of a high rock pyramid. This area is dotted with volcano-shaped mounds of various sizes, remnants of previous upliftings of the earth. The geology is dramatic in all directions with vast striated cliffs and sedimentary layers punctuated here and there with igneous flows. We faced a white sand beach backed by a low field of cacti that thin out as they climb a gently sloping hill. Elegant terns, brown boobies, and pelicans dotted the bay, feasting on the small baitfish we saw swarming in the water.

The unspoiled beauty and abundance of wildlife in the northern Sea reminded us of Southeast Alaska, where we



Sail rock near Puerto Refugio

spent a summer prior to cruising to Mexico. It was not unusual to see two or three pods of dolphins leaping in the distance and whale soundings and sightings were frequent. The waters were teeming with fish and the birds seemed to be enjoying the abundance. At night, the sunsets were glorious. Afterwards, there were hundreds of stars, so many that we found it difficult to pick out many of the familiar constellations.

The next morning we continued on towards Bahia de Los Angeles (LA Bay). It had been four days since we had seen any other cruising boats and I was ready for a little socializing. We explored Puerto Don Juan, the famous hurricane hole with all-around wind protection. It looked inviting, but the

Tucson Sailors were there and had taken over most of the anchorage so we cruised around the western shore of LA Bay to La Mona, an anchorage in the far southeast corner. Along the way, we caught another beautiful small yellowtail. The wind was blowing 15 from the SE, so it was a great place to put down the hook for the night.

Lining the beach across from the anchorage was a settlement of small vacation homes, mostly owned by expatriate Americans and Canadians. A rough dirt road led from there ten miles into LA Village, where owners buy water to truck back to their homes. There was no electricity to this settlement except for individual generators and we didn't ask about sewage. Also anchored in La Mona were two brothers we had met in Santa Rosalia on their individual boats. We invited them over for beer and conversation that evening.

We stayed in La Mona the next four nights. The Tucson Sailing Club came in one evening for a beach party in front of a home owned by some of their members and we enjoyed Sunday dinner aboard *Grumpy*, a trawler owned by one of the brothers. The sea was alive with creatures and we were most delighted when a 25-foot whale shark, who we nicknamed Clyde, swam up to and around the boat for a few hours one day. It had a huge 4-foot wide head and many large spots on its back. These gentle, docile surface feeding creatures are the largest fish known to man. They filter-feed like whales but also have small teeth in the front. Dean caught a third yellowtail trolling along the beach and we had another stellar lunch.

Early the next morning we pulled up the anchor for a trip into town for provisions. It is possible to anchor off the village and take a dinghy to a dock near Guillermo's restaurant. But as we came near, we looked at the tide table and realized that if we kept heading north at that hour, we would have a four hour favorable current to our next anchorage, Puerto Refugio. Checking our stores, I concluded that we would be okay without more provisions and that I would just have to dig into the canned and frozen veggies that I had on hand for just such eventualities. And if we ran out of beer, we'd just have to drink tequila or rum. What a sacrifice!

We cruised along the edge of town and passed the lighthouse near Punta Arena where I had heard you can pick up a wi-fi signal. Sure enough, I was able to download some email and bring up a webpage while we cruised by. On the other side of Punta Arena, however, we had a bit of a scare. The depth sounder started beeping and we found ourselves in only

seven feet of water. There is a large shoal area that we hadn't expected but we quickly made our way into deeper water. We then passed La Gringa, a fine sand beach at the north end of the bay and a winter destination for RV's. There was a lone sloop in the anchorage there and only a couple of pick-up campers on the beach.

From there we traveled along the rocky western shore of Isla Coronado (also called Isla Smith), which is composed of a tall, symmetrical volcano on the northern half. The guide books say there is a hiking trail to the top but it looked too daunting for us - almost straight up! We then ventured into Canal de Ballenas (Whales) along the west side of Isla Angel de La Guarda, where we indeed saw whales - a herd of about a dozen with large, curved dorsal fins splashing near the surface. We tentatively identified them as Short-finned Pilot Whales, although it is difficult to be sure with only a few glimpses.

It was almost noon and the wind started picking up from the southeast. As we neared the northern tip of Isla Angel de La Guarda, we found ourselves in 18-20 knots of wind with short, steep four-foot following seas. We closely monitored our GPS coordinates to avoid a hidden reef near Sail Rock. By the time we rounded Isla Meija into Puerto Refugio, the seas had abated. We gazed with delight at the islands and beaches of this beautiful "refuge" with several anchorages that together give wind protection from any direction. We anchored in the lovely West Bight, which gave us shelter from west, south, and east winds.

We were fortunate that, arriving near high tide, we were able to avoid the many rocks and reefs that were hidden from view. Pelicans standing on one submerged reef alerted us to its location and the charts in our guidebooks accurately predicted the others. Still, we were amazed when the tide went down to see a long finger of rocks protruding from a nearby point. The tidal swing so far north in the Sea of Cortez rivals that of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska - a ten foot difference where we were anchored. And along with this tidal swing comes currents of up to five knots that need to be taken into account when planning a passage. Unfortunately, we were not able to find any tables to predict these currents and they seemed at times to be counter-intuitive to what we read on the tide tables.

Another navigational challenge in these waters was the inaccuracy of the nautical charts. GPS chart plotters often placed the boat 1-2 miles off its actual location, which often showed us anchoring two miles inland. Much more reliable were the GPS coordinates given in the two guidebooks that became our bibles for this part of the Sea - Gerry Cunningham's excellent *Sea of Cortez Guidebooks and Charts* and the newer *Sea of Cortez - A Cruiser's Guidebook* by Shawn Breeding and Heather Bansmer.

Each new anchorage reveals hidden surprises, depending on the time of day, the tide, the light, and the phases of the moon. West Bight was no exception. To the south was a cobble-stone like gravel beach, with intermittent caves sporting clearly defined sedimentary layers of ochre and sienna. Behind the gravel beach were sand and a few straggly green cacti marching up a gentle slope. Along this hillside were scattered hundreds of small, white bushes that looked like dead branches but had a few buds on the ends. We had no idea what they were, but they reminded us of the ancient Bristol Cone Pine trees we saw once in northeastern Nevada.

To the west, there was a vista of rugged rock peaks in the distance with shorter, symmetrical, volcano-like hills of various hues in front, reminding us of the Yellowstone River Valley. North of us was Isla Granita, a white granite island that was home to a vocal colony of sea lions, along with the apt-named Piedra Blanca (White Rock). And to the east, there was a ragged reef with guano covering the three highest points. At high tide this completely disappeared.

Dean fished off the stern, catching triggerfish and striped bass, and we dinghied around exploring some of the other nearby anchorages. For northerly winds, which are more common in the winter months, West Bay looked like it would give great protection. The only other vessels there were large dive boats from Puerto Penasco (Rocky Point), 100 miles to the north.

One problem we faced was the bees, which are on a constant search for water in the dry, desert climate. We woke one morning to find hundreds of them on the bow drinking the morning dew. But they were not aggressive and with our screens up they did not bother us. The temperature was in the mid-70's to mid-80's, much more comfortable than further south.

We enjoyed evenings in the cockpit, watching the sunset and the afterglow. The phosphorescence in the water at night mirrored the stars with little pinpoint of light from the bait fish lighting up the bay. This was punctuated by frequent streaks of luminescence from larger fish swimming by. Sublime!

The weather forecast was for strong southeasterly winds, so we stayed put there for a couple of extra days. One evening we had steady 25-30 knot winds with gusts to 40 but we were quite comfortable in 20 feet of water in the West Bight. We finally left after five glorious days and nights, pulling the anchor up before sunrise to take advantage of the falling tide. We were heading for Isla Estanque, on the southeast corner of Isla Angel de la Guarda. But the seas were light and the current was with us so we decided to continue on across the Sea to Punta Willard on Isla Tiburon. Along the way we caught a small dorado (mahi-mahi), our favorite fish.

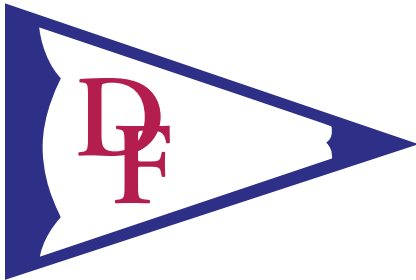


Bees sipping morning dew

By this time, we were heading back to the barn, so to speak, our summer moorage at Marina Real in San Carlos. The next day, we intended to stop in Dog Bay, on the opposite side of Tiburon, but again decided to keep going, this time to the Las Cocinas anchorage on the mainland side. But by the time we got there, a western swell was going straight into the bay and it would have been a very rolly night. With only a couple of hours of daylight left, we scurried onward to San Pedro Bay and barely got the anchor down before dusk became night. We had traveled 93 miles that day in 12 hours! It sure felt good to turn off the motor.

The next morning, it was an easy 14 mile jaunt into Marina Real, where we now sit. The temperatures here are nearing 100 and I now wonder why we were in such a

hurry to get back. But new adventures beckon and now that we have explored the Northern Sea, we know that we will go back there again - many more times, I hope.



About our DeFever's

Art Defever and his wonderful boats have touched all of our lives. This feature in the Magazine serves to inform or update what we know about our boats. . . their history of ownership, or the progression of design.

RUECKER, Tim and Robin (#1192) 1986 • DF51 POC • LEISEA Phoenix, AZ

Special Boat History

My husband, Tim and I have owned LEISEA for three and a half years now, and her home port is the Kona Marina in San Diego, California. We purchased the boat from Jim and Rita David and they purchased the boat from Ruth Lacey DeFever.

Art (#1) and his wife Dulcie built their boat and a sister boat for Gordon and Ruth Lacey at the same time. The four of them were best friends. After the boats were completed and they all cruised around together, Gordon Lacey passed away and within a year's time, Dulcie DeFever passed away. Sometime after that, Art and Ruth were married and no longer needed two boats! So, Ruth sold her boat to the Davids and they owned her for seven wonderful years before we bought her.



MARCH, Gary and Linda (#1103) 1999 • DF60 Grand Alaskan • MARCH WINDS IV Overland Park, KS

Boat History

Our boat was originally christened *Nirvana* and the owner was Jeff Drucek. He owned the boat for about six months and then ordered a larger Grand Alaskan. Rumor has it that he got into an argument with Gary Oviatt (Grand Alaskan builder) about a new boat and Jeff ended up starting up Outer Reef Yachts instead. Jeff sold the boat to an individual named

Billy Farr, a Cajun from Louisiana. The exact town is unknown, but I do remember speaking to Mr. Farr on the phone one time and he mentioned the Louisiana thing. The details on dates sold/purchased are beyond me.

We purchased the boat on November 7, 2002. The official purchase took place in Bimini, Bahamas and she is now registered in the Cayman Islands (George Town) and has been marked "MARCH WINDS IV" in accordance with the British Ships Registry.

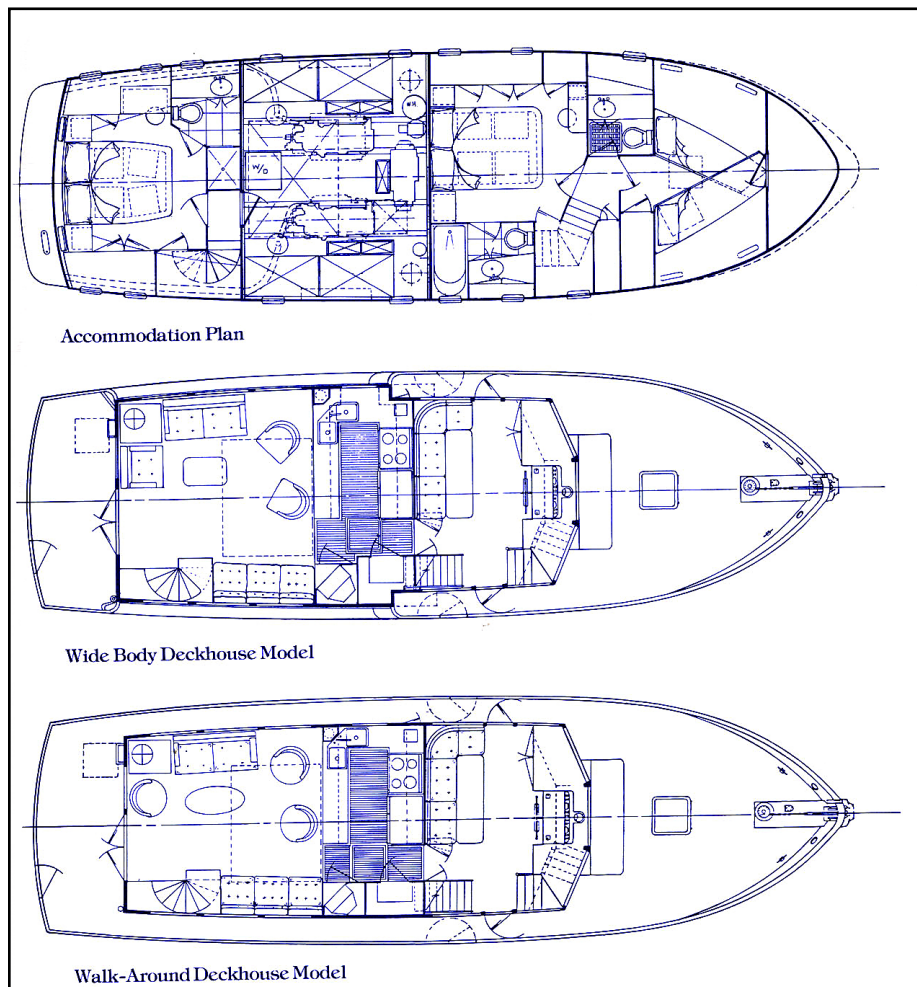
Obviously we enjoy our boat tremendously. We do make a pretty good effort to average about one week to ten days a month onboard. We just recently had a custom hard top built for the fly bridge and we got that set into place two weeks ago.

We do plan to do a little cruising next month. We have blocked out a six week slot on our calendar commencing in the middle of May. The plan is to make a run over to the islands. That may change and we may just do a run down to the Keys, do the "mini loop" around the southern tip of Florida and back through Lake Okeechobee. Anyway, time will tell.



DEIN, Bob & Barbara (#2) 1999 • DeFever 44 • GONDOLA Venice, FL

DeFever Boat History – the Classic 50



Although usually when thinking 'DeFever' – it is probably a 44, a 49RPH, or a 53POC that comes to mind, there are some interesting limited production and one-offs that also are Arthur DeFever (#1) designs.

There were only three of the DeFever Classic 50 Long Range Offshore Cruisers made in 1988/89 at the request of Florida DeFever importer Gary Oviatt. Produced at Sen Koh Shipbuilding in Kaoshiung, Taiwan, they were the response to the desire for a slightly larger pilothouse model than the very popular 49, but with a three-stateroom configuration. Two staterooms were forward, with the owner's stateroom situated aft accessed by a curved stairway from the salon. It was available as either a 'wide-body' or as a 'walk-around.'

Specs: LOA: 50', LWL: 42', Beam: 15', Draft: 4'6", Headroom: 6' 8", Water: 400 gal., Fuel: 800 gal., Displacement: 52,999 lbs., Bridge clearance mast down – 16' 9", mast up – 22'.



Hull number one (#1), a wide-body, was dated 1988, had twin Caterpillar 210s, a 15 kW Onan, and was named FRANKIE J. Arnold and Barbara Karp purchased this vessel in 1994 and changed the name to BUTCH. This hull was destroyed by fire in early 1999.

Hull number two (#2), a walk-around, was dated 1989, and was outfitted with twin Lehman 135s, Westerbeke 12 and 4 kW generators, and has been known as TRES KARMA, TRANQUILITY BASE (Tom and Peggy Fryer), HYPNAUTIQUE (Frank and Susan Moulton, bought 1995), CIRCE (Jim and Margie Mitchell, bought 2000), and PATTI J (Jim and Patti Kennedy #861, bought 2006).



Hull number three (#3), a wide body, was also dated 1989, was driven by Caterpillar 210s, and had Westerbeke 8 and 15 kW generators. Vernon Brunelle was the original owner, naming the vessel OMEGA. A commercial pilot, Vernon was basically a single-hander, traveling Florida, the Chesapeake, and the Bahamas from the time he purchased her brand new, until shortly before his death. He also had nearly perfect attendance at all of the Oviatt and DeFever Cruisers Rendezvous held during those years. The second owner (Willard Gilson) and third owners (Bill and Charlotte Rudy #1054, bought in 2008) retained the name.

The only occasion that we know of where all three vessels were in the same location simultaneously was at the 1997 South Seas Plantation, FL, Rendezvous. Unfortunately no one realized that special bit of DeFever history, and there wasn't even a photo-op arranged, neither of vessels nor skippers.



BRESSLER, Bill & Michelle (#894) 1962 • DF65 Custom • OUR ISLAND Bainbridge Island, WA

Ownership History

1962-1968: Stanley and Carman Maria Spencer were the original owners and had her built in Wilmington, CA by Skallerud and Sons. The boat was in the April edition of Sea Magazine and resided in the Long Beach, CA area.

1968-1974: Ralph Williams, Long Beach, CA.

1974-2003: Paul and Betty Ricoban inked the purchase deal on a cocktail napkin. Paul completely updated the interior and exterior style of the boat during his ownership. She served as the committee boat during the TransPac race to Hawaii twice. She also made two trips to Alaska and many to Mexico. Paul kept her in Long Beach, CA and still has his mooring buoy for her at Catalina Island. He said we can use his moorage there anytime we get down his way. We originally tried to purchase the boat from Paul but could not work a deal. We did stay in touch over the years and became friends.

2003-2005: Frank and Robyn Miller was the couple in second position behind us when we tried to purchase the boat originally. They made some upgrades to the electronics and deck work while they owned her. Sadly, Frank had some health issues which lead to selling the boat.

2005-present: Bill & Michelle Bressler. About a year after Paul sold the boat, we tried to find the new owners. Paul knew their names, but didn't know where they lived. We searched the internet, and after a few months found Frank and Robyn. We sent them a certified letter explaining who we were and that if they ever thought about selling the boat, we would be interested. They exchanged contact info with us, and we would call them about every six months just to check and see what was new. One day they said it was time for them to sell and asked if we would be interested. We were on the boat the next weekend. I had been on the boat when Paul had it for sale, but Michelle had only seen pictures. She wasn't on the boat fifteen minutes, when she came up to me and whispered in my ear, "let's get it". That was five years ago. We have been living aboard now for the past four and a half years and remodeling her from the bottom up. We are now in the galley and only have the salon to finish before we start on the outside. We have been to Alaska once and are heading back this spring.

(Note: See the Winter 2010 DFC Magazine for an article and photos of the transformation. – Ed.)



DeFever Cruisers Embroidered Items

A variety of clothing and other items are available with the DeFever Cruisers Burgee logo from www.mediasource.net. To go to the custom embroidery shop click on the bottom right icon: "Stylesource." Then enter the password, "defever" in all lower case. There are no minimums. For promotional items, click on the bottom left icon and search for a product that you like (there are minimum quantities for promo items).

DeFever
TECH

YOST, Ralph & Celeste (#1138) 1982 • DeFever 41 • SAY
GOOD-BYE Linwood, NJ

Replacing Seals on Purasan Type-1 Marine Sanitation Device

In the summer of 2007 I installed a Purasan Type-1 Marine Sanitation Device made by Raritan. In our 1982 DeFever 41, I located it in the bilge next to the shaft.

A few weeks ago I noticed slight leakage of discharge seeping from the top of the Purasan treatment box. The leak was traced to a small slot at the base of the macerator motor on top of the second (discharge) chamber. Great, just what I needed. Time to repair the treatment tank!

The Purasan treatment tank utilizes two chambers: an entry chamber and a discharge chamber. Each chamber has a macerator mixer motor mounted on top of the treatment box. The macerator motor spins a shaft that enters the treatment chamber and is protected by special seals manufactured by Raritan. Two seals cost about \$40 plus shipping from Raritan - part # 31-102, Motor Shaft Seal.

To change the seals, you need to remove the top of the treatment box. That's where the fun begins. Be sure you do this job in a well ventilated area.

The tools you will need to perform this job are as follows:

1. 5/16" wrench
2. 5/16" nut driver
3. 5/16" socket on a 1/4" socket drive with small extension
4. 3/8" wrench
5. 3/8" socket
6. 7/16" wrench
7. Slotted screw driver
8. Hammer or rubber mallet
9. Small tube of silicone glue
10. Did I mention rubber gloves?
11. Roll of paper towels
12. Bottle of white vinegar

First, run fresh water through the toilet system about ten times to reduce the anticipated odor. Next, pour white vinegar into the toilet bowl and flush.

Shut off the power to the Purasan system, close the discharge through hull sea cock, and open the windows and doors to allow ventilation. If you have a fan, set it up to blow over the work area.

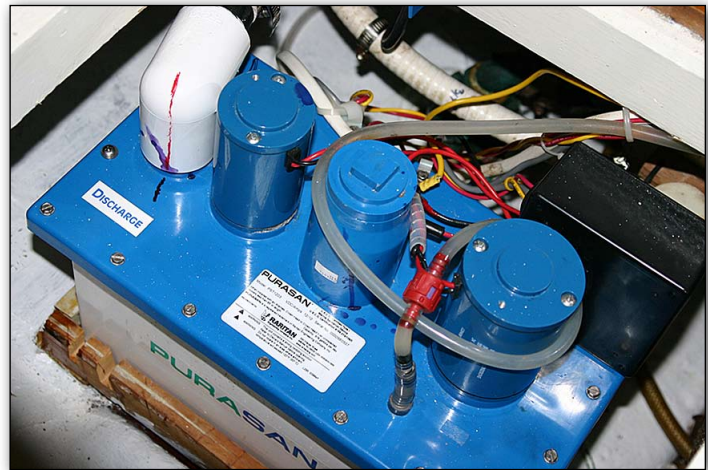
Follow the Purasan manual for winterization of the treatment tank. Basically, you remove the crossover lid. Use a drill pump with a long tube inserted into each side of the tank and pump out into a bucket. Discard the waste in the bucket into the toilet at your marina - do not throw it overboard.

Disconnect the discharge hose, drain it, then plug the hose with a few rolled up paper towels. Do the same with the discharge outlet on top of the treatment box.

I disconnected all the wires connected to the treatment tank. You need to remove all the wires connected to the ground and the positive terminals. (You do not need to remove any of the control wires that terminate in the black control box.)

You will use your 7/16" wrench here. I removed the +12 volt positive connections first, and used some household string to run through the ring terminators to keep them grouped together.

Next I removed the wires from the negative ground terminal on the treatment box. Again I used string to tie these wires all together and keep them separated from those that connect to the +12 volt terminal.



At this point, all the electrical wires should be disconnected from the top of the treatment tank and the discharge hose should be disconnected.

REMOVING THE TANK TOP

Using a small Phillips head screwdriver, remove the four screws that hold the cover on the black control circuit box.

Now remove the two 5/16" screws in the bottom of the black box that hold down the treatment tank lid. Loosen and remove the locknuts underneath the screws with a 3/8" wrench.

Once these nuts are removed, lift out the two screws. The black control box is now free to be moved out of the way. There's no need to disconnect any of the wires.

There are a total of eighteen of these 5/6" slotted screws to remove around the tank lid. Only sixteen more to go! I used the 1/4" ratchet wrench with an extension and a 3/8" socket on the underside to loosen each of the nuts. However, some of the screws were longer than others and my 3/8" socket couldn't reach the nut. (There did not appear to be any reason why some of these were longer than others. I concluded it was a matter of supply in the production line.) You may need to use the 3/8" wrench as well as the ratchet wrench. On the top side, I used the 5/16" nut driver on the screw head as that holds much better than a slotted screw driver. It spins the bolt better also.

After you have removed all eighteen screws and nuts that hold the treatment tank lid on the tank, you will next need your rubber mallet or hammer. First, see how lucky you are and try to pry the lid up at various locations around the box. If it doesn't budge, then use the hammer. Start by gently tapping the underside of the lid UPWARD. You are working against a rubber seal that doesn't have any glue but is nonetheless sandwiched between the lid and the box. Once you break open the marriage of the lid and the seal or the seal and box, then you can work around the rest of the lid. It may take you 30 minutes or more to get this lid loose, so be patient. Hitting it too hard only runs the risk of fracturing the plastic... and

it's not worth it. Keep tapping gently but firmly.

Get your rubber gloves on.

Once you have the lid free and off the box, you may want to pour more vinegar into the input side of the treatment box to reduce the odor.

Lift the lid off and roll it over upside down. Remove the macerator mixer blade on each motor shaft. This will require a screw driver. I wrapped each mixer blade with a few paper towels, grabbed them with my left hand and loosened the screw with my right hand.

You will see two globs of silicone glue under the macerator motor on the bottom of the lid. Pull off the silicone glue globs and throw them away. That reveals two screws that hold the macerator motor in place. Remove each screw but hold the motor in your other hand as they become free. Pull the motor off the lid and the shaft out of the lid. Using a clean

paper towel, thoroughly clean the area on the bottom of the lid where the two screws were so that you can properly apply new silicone to a clean surface when done. The silicone is only to keep the screws from getting corroded.

The seal you will be replacing is in the top of the lid where the shaft enters the lid. Pull out the old seal from the side with a screw driver.

Using the "Super Grease" provided by Raritan in the new seal package, grease the edge of the hole where the seal inserts. Push in the new seal with the metal band facing towards the tank. Next use the rest of the tube of super grease around the top of the seal where the motor will mate up to it. I put some grease on the shaft where the shaft will be rubbing the seal. Reassemble by pushing the shaft back into the lid through the new seal. Reinstall the two screws that hold the motor in place.

Repeat this process for the other motor and replace that seal too, even if its not leaking. It's definitely better to spend that \$20 now, even if you don't think its necessary, than to have to take this treatment tank apart again!

Next apply a very generous gob of new silicone glue to the screw heads that hold the motors so it will dry as you saw



the original globs. You can't use too much for this job but you can possibly not apply enough, so be generous. Be sure the entire screw head is completely covered in silicone.

Go take a 30 minute break while the silicone glue dries.

Reassemble the lid. In order to ensure the rubber gasket is aligned properly, place the gasket onto the upside down lid, then thread the eighteen screws into the lid holes and through the gasket. Each one was snug enough to hold the gasket in place. Turn it over and place on the treatment tank. Tighten each nut only until snug until they are all on, then go back and tighten them down gradually, each one opposite the other side of the box. Repeat until all are tightened sufficiently.



Reconnect your discharge plumbing hose, electrical wires, and check everything over.

Follow the Purasan manual for recommissioning after winterization. Basically you remove the crossover cap and fill each side of the treatment box with water. The minimum amount of water to be in the box is three gallons. I used a funnel and filled it until I could see it was full. Put the cap back on the crossover. Apply power.

You should be ready to run again. Turn the power back on and give it a try.

Happy flushing !



HEIN, Dick & Mary (#1189) 1979 • DeFever 43 • HEINSITE Green Cove Springs, FL

Fuel Tank Saga from THE DORCAS HARDY

We had placed the boat on the hard in Marina Puerto Del Rey in Fajardo, Puerto Rico in July 2002. The fuel tanks were full, about 225 gallons in each. What follows are pertinent portions of our log:

January 2, 2003: THE DORCAS HARDY went back into the water. After a bit of cranking, the engine started and we motored over to the slip. When we got to the slip, I noticed one problem, the bilge contained more than a little diesel fuel. I will have to track down this leak.

January 3, 2003: Bilge had more diesel fuel in it. Where is it coming from? We have a small pump aboard and we used it to empty the bilge into our spare fuel jugs, dumping about 20 gallons of the fuel into the oil disposal station.

January 4, 2003: Took the rental car for a ride to Salinas on the south coast. When we returned to the boat about 1800, our little fuel leak had grown considerably. Worse, we couldn't get into the yard to dispose of the fuel. We finally found a fellow trawler owner and he took the fuel. We poured about 80 gallons into his tanks by 2000 that evening. This is tough! The leaky tank had about 225 gallons in it and the yard is closed tomorrow, Sunday, and Monday, which is Three Kings holiday. What to do with the growing fuel in the bilge? Finally, a light bulb went off and I thought of closing the fuel tank vent - this should slow down the leak.

January 5, 2003: Inspection of the bilge in the morning revealed just a few gallons of fuel in the bilge. Closing the vent worked, but where was the leak? I had to dismantle the wall in the engine room that sealed off the portside tank. Found that the fuel was leaking from the center of the tank, not from some hose or fitting somewhere. This is truly bad news! A leaky tank is roughly equivalent to a ruptured aneurysm in human terms and probably as expensive to repair. Later had to do some research on tank repair, and found a couple of articles in PassageMaker magazine that provide some hope.

January 6, 2003: Closed fuel vent keeps our leak at bay. Found an Internet café and did some research on a tank sealing product called Microseal, which looks promising.

January 7, 2003: We have a plan! We'll cut inspection plates into the side of the fuel tanks, clean out the insides, and apply the Microseal. Called New York and ordered the product. Had one of the yard companies over to discuss it. His estimate of \$1,000 to cut inspection plates was a bit steep we think - we'll get more estimates.

January 8, 2003: Had another yard worker over today. He crawled back behind the tanks (where I cannot get) and described a large area of rust on the side of the tank. His advice - don't spend another nickel on these tanks, just replace them. He can do the job with aluminum tanks from Florida for \$3500. I don't think I want aluminum tanks as I heard they can have a short life.

January 9, 2003: We check at the company that did our bottom because they do a lot of fiberglass work and can make tanks. We strike a deal: \$2500 for removing the old tank and installing two new custom fiberglass tanks in its place. They will have a slightly smaller capacity but they should be eternally impervious to rust and leaks. We have a feeling of relief that something is started, and I am quite happy with the thought of fiberglass tanks. However, Junior, the owner, wants \$2000 upfront. He says he will have to buy a lot of fiberglass and resin that he doesn't normally stock. Alarms go off, red flags flash before my eyes, but in the end, what are my alternatives? We cough up \$2000 in cash.

January 10, 2003: Luis the yard worker shows up at 0800 to start removing the tank. He first gets all the wood work out of the way - a tough job made tougher as the only tools he has is a small hammer and a chisel. The nails the Taiwan yard used in constructing the boat are three-inch stainless steel barbed nails. They do not come out easily, and he has to work in a cramped space on his knees. Later, when the wood is removed, he tackles the tank. He has a reciprocating saw, but the only blades he has are blades intended for wood. All of this is so reminiscent of Mexico! Willing workers ill equipped. Nonetheless, at day's end most of the face of the tank is cut but still held in place by the internal baffles. I'm anxious to examine the interior but will have to wait until Monday.

January 13, 2003: Luis the yard worker woke us up at 0715. Today he had enough metal blades for his saw and he finally got the tank out around 1200. I don't know how they will get the new tanks in. I looked for a leaky spot in the old tank but there was nothing really obvious. At the place where the fuel dripped there was some rust on the outside but did not really look that bad. No denying the leak though!

January 28, 2003: It's been two weeks since the fuel tank came out so the new tanks are due today or this week. Puerto Rico isn't really "manana-land" but it does share some characteristics so we'll see.

January 31, 2003: Went to check on the progress of our tanks. Junior, through his translator, says he needs two more weeks and naturally I am angry. He says the humidity has been too high to do fiberglass work. Right - like the humidity ever goes away in Eastern Puerto Rico! So we are still waiting.

February 4, 2003: Ortiz from the yard and one of his henchmen show up to make more measurements for the tank installation. They conclude that we will need three smaller tanks rather than two larger tanks. No problem with that except I wonder if this is a grab for more money or a reason to further delay the job, or both. In any case, Ortiz says he will start building the tanks today, and it will take a couple days, he says. We'll see.

February 5, 2003: Walked to the yard today to ascertain the progress on the tank. Lo and behold, there was a half-built tank on a worktable in the shop. It was missing one side, but progress to be sure if it is ours. We're cheered!

February 6, 2003: Still no further action that I can see on the tanks. At this point I am thinking of a backup plan. I talked to Willie the Welder, who at least speaks good English so we can communicate easily. Willie can build aluminum tanks for about \$2,000, but he does not install. If all goes bad with Junior, at least I have somewhere else to go. Willie says he will come down to the boat and have a look either today or tomorrow. He doesn't show today.

February 7, 2003: I walked to the yard to check on progress and found that nothing had changed since Wednesday. Junior is never around. Ortiz won't say anything except that he works for Junior - in other words, "don't bother me". Willie doesn't show up either. This is getting aggravating!

February 8, 2003: Took the funny car shopping in the morning - our usual run: West Marine, post office, and grocery store. Went to the yard on our return and found no further progress on the tanks.

February 10, 2003: Went to the yard and found Junior. Through his interpreter, he whines about having to make three tanks now and this will take much longer, blah, blah blah! He assures us that they will be finished on Friday and we just know he is lying through his teeth. We made the classic mistake of giving him too much money in advance so what can we do?

February 12, 2003: We got our mail today and all our tax statements were there. Looks like we'll owe a bunch this year. While stewing over this development, the air conditioning shut off. The water circulating pump failed, again. These March pumps are so unreliable that I carry a spare, so for the fourth time in five years, the air conditioning has a new circulating pump. My spirits were warmed considerably with beef stroganoff for dinner.

February 14, 2003: Went to the yard and found and talked to Junior, again, through his interpreter. He promises that the tanks will be installed Tuesday and the whole job will be done by Friday. I point out that our single tank in the fiberglass shop is gathering dust and hasn't been touched for over a week. He says he will be in on Saturday, and Sunday if necessary, to finish it. We believe this as much as his claim that he couldn't build them before because it was too humid.

Grasping at straws, Mary went to the office of the owner of the Hotel Marina complex. She knows Blanca, the owner's secretary. Blanca said to talk to Tom, the dock master. After hearing our tale of woe, Tom got indignant and said he would talk to Junior. I don't know what he can do but at least it's nice to have a sympathetic ear. Later on the fly bridge, enjoying the weather and beauty of our surroundings with an adult beverage in our hands, our VHF radio starts to go bonkers. Great! They say things come in threes and we have the tank, the pump and now the radio. If the saying is true, we should be home free.

February 16, 2003: We discussed our options regarding the tanks. What if Junior doesn't deliver, or demands more money for the third tank? Do we kiss \$2,000 goodbye? If so what then? Have Willie make tanks for another \$2,000 plus more for another guy to install? Paying for something twice is a mortal sin. We can't really leave on one tank because of the stability issue - we could live with one tank on the ICW but not on the ocean. Maybe we could ship the boat to Florida and replace the tank in the U.S. at our leisure, but that probably is not cost effective. What to do?

February 18, 2003: Big day today. At 0730 Junior and his interpreter came to the boat. He evidently heard from the marina management. He had several stories. First, he would start tank installation today and finish by the end of the week. Then later he said he would install one tank today and the rest next week. Then he said he would have to move the generator to get them in. With that we said "Forget it!" and we asked for our money back. With that, he said he would give us a refund later that afternoon and departed. Later that day he did in fact count out 100 \$20 bills. We were very surprised to get anything back, let alone our full deposit.

Later we learned that Tom the dock master spoke to marina owner's wife and told her of our plight. She told her husband who in turn called Junior and evidently put the fear of God in him. So this little soap opera resulted in a full refund for us. The good news was we had our money back. The bad news is that it is now six weeks later and we are no closer to having our tank replaced.

We went over to Island Marine, a shop run by Ken and Rick - a couple of gringos. To make a long story short, we are ordering tanks through them from New Jersey. The tanks should run \$2200-2400 including shipping and duty. They said it should take about two weeks for the tanks to arrive and then two or three days of installation at \$45 per hour. This saga does go on.

February 27, 2003: Mary ran into Ken from Island Marine today. He said the tanks had been built and were on their way to the ship. If the truck made it in time for the Friday sailing, we could have the tanks in Puerto Rico by next Tuesday. Great news, or at least a possibility of great news! Maybe the end is in sight.

March 3, 2003: Had to work in the engine room today. We need to have a platform for the new, narrower, fuel tanks to sit on. I cut four plywood strips and had to fiberglass them to the hull. I had the materials but I bought some more epoxy resin and hardener at West Marine on Saturday so I was sure to have enough for the job. About halfway through the job, I ran out of epoxy and found that I could not unscrew the pumps from the old cans - they were solid! Rather than buy new pumps, I borrowed some epoxy from Christian. The pumps on his can were a different size so I couldn't just borrow his pumps.

March 10, 2003: Stopped at the yard to see if the tanks were in. They weren't, but Jennifer in the office called and found they were on the ship that was due to dock tomorrow so we could have them here by Wednesday or Thursday. Exciting news!

March 13, 2003: The tanks have arrived and they look good! They have a light gray epoxy coating. Took the funny car on an expedition to locate all the fittings I'll need which is no mean feat since nobody has everything we need. We celebrated with dinner and a movie.

March 14, 2003: Spoke with Ken at the yard. He'll bring the tanks down to the boat on Monday and we can start installation then. "What's wrong with today?" I think to myself. I spent the afternoon installing some more copper foil for the single side band radio ground. The copper is fifty feet long and three inches wide. The trick is to lay it out on the hull back and forth with three inches between each course without cutting it. Then I lay some fiberglass cloth over it and epoxy it in place. This should help the SSB performance.

March 15, 2003: Today marks the sixth anniversary of our maiden voyage on THE DORCAS HARDY. On that day, Mary and I, Fred and Mary Ann Haines, Sal and Judy Caruso departed Sausalito, went over to the San Francisco city front and then to the Oakland estuary. Seems like last week. In remembrance, I spent most of the day in the hold continuing to epoxy the copper foil in place. It's not easy working on a 40 degree angle with at most, forty inches of headroom. I have to put about 10 feet in place, apply the cloth and epoxy and then wait an hour or so for it to dry. Then I can sit on that portion and apply another 10 feet or so. Tedious work.

In the evening, we went up to enjoy the regatta festivities. It was the usual stuff: food tent, beer tent, and a large tent for the band - a very good band. Unique to Puerto Rican events, they always seem to have a "style" show. This consists of a couple of male models in summer wear and lots of very pretty young ladies in tiny swim suits. The mostly male crowd loves

it and I did too!

March 16, 2003: Finished the last 10 feet of copper foil installation. Turns out it was a good thing to wait until Monday for the tank installation since I used all of the space in the under-the-tank area for the copper foil.

March 17, 2003: The tanks were delivered to the boat at about 1100. Ken came down about 1400 to begin the installation. I will be his helper and Mary has volunteered to be our “go-fer”. With some grunting we got the smaller of the two set in place by 1700. We only got one major dent, on the sill of the port side door when I lost my grip on the rather slippery tank. Tomorrow we’ll deal with the larger of the two.

March 18, 2003: Ken shows up at 0800. We have to hook up the fuel filler hose and the tank vent as well as install the elbow for the cross-feed between the tanks. About 1100 we’re ready to get the bigger tank inside. I removed the cooling system expansion tank from the engine to create space. Getting the tank in turns out to be a much bigger chore. Just getting it over the engine room hatch is a tremendous effort. The tank is roughly 79”x 30”x 13” and it weighs about 100 pounds. The engine room hatch measures 68” by 28” and we have 13” of clearance between the engine and the ceiling. In theory, it should fit in but it is not that simple, but all the built-in furniture is in the way. We struggle and struggle but it won’t go in.

I begin to wonder if we have not made a tragic measuring mistake. Then Mary has a stroke of genius - she suggests using her flexible nylon cutting board as a slide. We bend and tape it in place over the manifold so the tank can slide across easily. Who says women aren’t good in the engine room? We remove a small wooden trim piece from the engine room ceiling and these little things do the trick – the tank slides in without further difficulty.

Getting the tanks settled in place and installing the rest of the fittings and getting the uprights back in position take the rest of the day. It was a tough day, especially for Ken. He spent hours working on a surface that had about a thirty degree angle and limited headroom at the center of the boat, less on the outside. Having Ken for the installation was money well spent, but I have to do the rest of plumbing and carpentry myself.

March 19, 2003: I spent several hours of the day cutting and fitting plywood to replace the sound wall, and I also noted that the fittings for the generator fuel line were not tight so I’ll have to replace them. Started the engine today after a nearly three month rest. It started easily and ran well, however cooling water leaked from around the expansion tank. Turns out I did not properly tighten the nuts on the tank. Tightening them means disconnecting one of the hoses, spilling coolant into the bilge. The nuts are under the tank and one can get less than a quarter turn with each turn of the wrench. Naturally I must do this bent over on my knees - what a pain! My shoulders and knees ache tonight.

March 20, 2003: Finished fitting the plywood and ceiling tiles which will be used on the engine room wall as sound proofing and we discover another calamity. Christian sold the funny car yesterday so we don’t have access to free wheels anymore. In the afternoon we rented a car for a run to Costco for provisions and West Marine for more fittings.

Things are never easy working on a boat, but it’s been a real bear to get these tanks plumbed. The basic problem is that the new tanks have 1/2” fittings and the old tank had 3/8” inch fittings so I can’t just screw in the old valves. It’s nigh on impossible to find 1/2-to-3/8” adapters here, plus we don’t want to mount bronze fittings into an aluminum tank. The fittings are located low on the tank next to the hull and it is difficult to screw on a valve as the handle wants to drag on the floor. While doing this I have to lie on my side with only one hand to work the wrench or whatever. Luckily Mary is nearby to hand me whatever I have forgotten to bring down. The end result is that I end up with a fitting that’s about six inches long. In the case of the feed line to the generator, the line has to make a 180 degree turn to get to the fuel filter it’s not pretty, but it works!

March 21, 2003: It’s the “moment of truth” - time to put fuel in the tanks. The fuel transfer pump doesn’t want to pump fuel so I disassembled it and saw that the impeller is cracked and just spins inside the housing. After replacing the impeller we transferred 15 gallons of fuel from our jugs to the new tanks. Checked below and found the line to the main engine leaking - I didn’t tighten them properly. I have to disassemble the fittings and decide to replace the nylon “tee” fitting for the sight gauge with one made of bronze. Luckily we have the rental car until 1400.

We go Chandlery hopping to find the “tee”, and after three stops we are successful. We do some final grocery shopping and head back to the boat. By 1630 Mary has rearranged the fuel jugs in the lazarette and she has topped the water tanks and the spare jugs. The new fittings are in place and leak free and the sound wall is 90% done, so we call it a day. We got a lot accomplished in the last few days and maybe we can be on our way west by Monday.

March 22, 2003: My tank plumbing seems to be holding – there are no obvious leaks. I spent most of the day fitting the new ceiling tiles on the sound wall. It was an easy job but I still have to spend hours squatting with my knees bent.

March 23, 2003: We just put the engine room back together today - everything that got hauled out now has to go back in.

It has been quite an experience. The yard bill was \$3100 for tanks, transportation and labor, plus a bit more for fittings and hose. All the despair, irritation, and relief followed by great satisfaction - priceless!

West Marine New Member Discount

Just a reminder that West Marine as well as some other marine stores offer a discount program for new boat owners. You don't necessarily have to purchase a brand new boat – just a boat that is “new to you”. Proof of purchase is usually required to take advantage of the program, but do inquire at West (they offer a discount for 30 days) and at other marine retailers in your area. Thanks to Barbara and Bob Dein (#2) for this tip!

DeFever's
cruising
cruising

**ILIFF, Charles (#1210) 1982 • DeFever 44 •
INDIAN SUMMER Arnold, MD**
(Reprinted with permission from PropTalk Magazine)

HEFFALUMP Not!

“You want to name it WHAT?!”, Linda hollers: “*Heffalump??* You call a marina for a slip - what kind of woman do they expect to step off a boat named *Heffalump?* You get in trouble and call the Coast Guard? They’ll say: “*Heffalump??* Go ahead and sink.” *Heffalump??*” “But think about it,” I say, “Pooh kept dreaming of big vaguely-described animals, Heffalumps, that would sneak in and eat all his honey. He and Piglet dug Heffalump traps, but all they caught was themselves. Don’t you see, it really fits a big clunky trawler?” “Yeah?” Bob asks: “Who gets to be Piglet?” “Well, how about *Eeyore?*” I say. “I can identify with an old grey donkey.” And so goes the search for a name for our new-to-us DeFever 44.

But we get ahead of ourselves since our assignment for this article is “buying a used boat in a buyer’s market.” Perhaps we should start with how it became a buyer’s market. Simple: Bob Burnett and I caused it. In the Summer of 2008, one or the other of us said: “Hey, why don’t we get a bunch together and buy a boat to do the loop? We each can take it for part of the trip, leave it and the next group can take it for another leg. Most of the trip is within a day or two drive or easy flight.”

So we talked about it a bit, and got some others interested, and looked at a couple of sturdy Kadey-Krogens, and a collection of neat trawlers at Trawlerfest. And - as an obvious and immediate result of our interest in expensive boats, the stock market crashed. So, over the next year, the boat market became a buyer’s market. The only problem was that we, along with most of the other potential buyers in late 2008, had to put boat plans on the shelf. Our buying power had deteriorated faster than the boat prices.

But along came late 2009, and Bob’s adage: “It’s best to run out of money before you run out of time.” His daughters and grandchildren may not agree, but with that philosophy in mind we decided to start looking, again, but at lower financial levels.

The first place to look for a boat to buy is in *PropTalk*, of course. So we again looked at the Kadey-Krogens which were still a bit out of our reach, but capable of any cruising we could envision. A couple of 42s in Annapolis have stabilizers, so we could go to Bermuda, or ... Someone’s going to get a deal with those boats. The *PropTalk* display ads and classifieds had a lot of boats that would take us where we want to go. Some expensive, a few pretty cheap, some fast, some slow. Although our focus early on had been a trawler, we looked at a lot of boats, in pictures and from Annapolis docks - from the water and up on the hard - and tried to envision ourselves heading South in the Fall or North in the Spring, or at anchor in Rhode River or Shaw Bay or Dunn Cove at sunset or sunrise - at breakfast or suppertime, with young grandchildren or old friends. We had a lot of discussions, and a couple of great meals, laughing about memories and memories to be made in the future. We realized that looking for a boat is as much fun as cruising on one, but we went and bought one anyway.

We spent a bunch of time on Crusader’s website, and found a lot of different boats to consider. We talked to Scott Taylor at Crusader, who remembered our looking at a boat that he was showing at Trawlerfest 2008. He knew generally what we thought we were looking for, and gave some welcome advice. He went to look at a boat or two in Annapolis that he found he couldn’t recommend because of the amount of work needed. Each time we saw something that interested us, he helped with pros and cons that we added to our search list.

To learn a bit more about trawlers, we spent time looking over the layout and equipment in Larry and Polly Dulin's Fu Hwa Ocean 38, *Seaquel*. We liked it and learned a lot from Larry's descriptions of his trips up and down the ditch to Florida. We looked at pictures of everything from 36 to 50 feet, including the ones we couldn't possibly afford, but sure would like. We got aboard and looked carefully at a couple of Monk 42s, and liked them. Unfortunately, one needed a bit more work than we were willing to undertake, even though the price was right, and the other had an asking price reflecting her near boat-show condition. Mary, *PropTalk's* publisher and Rachel, ad sales rep for the magazine, looked at a couple of boats for us in Deltaville, during a driving rain and seven foot storm surge. In the miserable conditions, those boats didn't show well. A Jarvis Newman in Virginia looked nearly perfect - but sold the day before we called for an appointment to look at it. Another Jarvis Newman wasn't laid out quite as we wanted, although the hull and running gear certainly demanded that we consider it



A DeFever in the rain

seriously.



Then, on the Crusader website, we began to focus on a 1982 DeFever 44 Long Range Cruiser, located in Baltimore. We found information about the model on the DeFever Cruisers website, and Scott Taylor discussed the boat with us in some detail, including recent prices for similar boats. Scott handed us off to Neal Barrett, who was the listing broker. Neal arranged for us to spend time looking at the boat. When Lucy and Linda started talking about how we could contain young grandchildren in the salon - and the covered aft deck, and up on the flying bridge, we were pretty sure we'd found our boat. Neal arranged with the owner to have Captain Bo Weaver take us for ride to the Key Bridge and back. It didn't hurt that it was a beautiful day to be on the water. After some agonizing, we negotiated through Robin Harris at Harris Marine Financing for a loan, and through Christine Wilson at Hartge Insurance Associates for insurance. We made a low offer, which after a counter and some discussion, the owner accepted. We had Tarn Kelsey survey the hull and systems and Chris Oliver the engines, and the seller, Dr. Brady, had some work done pursuant to the survey reports.

Our search and purchase is probably similar to that leading to most boat purchases. First, we had an objective - the Loop. Interestingly, as the search progressed, we became less interested in the entire Loop and more focused on several places. Bob and Linda suggested Key West. Lucy has family in Cape Vincent, where the St. Lawrence leaves Lake Erie. Just managing to get to those two will be a significant accomplishment. The DeFever, however, is slow as are most trawlers, and our real destination is to be on the boat.

We've now transitioned from an evolving list of desired characteristics, through lists of possible acceptable boats, until suddenly our current list is of things needed to be done to the DeFever 44 to make it solid, reliable, and genuinely ours. And, with luck, we may actually get to Key West and Cape Vincent. Before we leave, however, we just have to agree on a #@\$&*%\$ name.



HOOKER, Robert & Alice (#222) 2000 • DF65 Grand Alaskan • BALI MOTU Sewalls Point, FL

BALI MOTU Cruising

We departed from home on May 17th at noon headed down the ICW to Lake Worth where we anchored out for the evening. With an early start (crack of dawn) we slipped out the inlet at West Palm and fished our way down to Biscayne

Bay where we anchored. We had seared little tunny for dinner and a bonita tuna salad for an appetizer (both very good the first day).

We left Biscayne Bay early, arriving at Bimini around 1:00 PM. We caught two skip jack tuna (returned to the sea) and three dolphin (mahi-mahi) of which only two were boarded – 14 and 12 pounds. Of the five fish all were caught with a lure that Larry Storza gave us - thank you again, Larry. That afternoon we had dolphin for dinner with *Jolly Good* who arrived a few hours later from Fort Lauderdale. *Jolly Good* is a new Outer Reef that Captain Steve and Captain Di Koch (#74) are aboard, taking the new owners around the Bahamas and teaching them to handle the boat. The next evening we had cocktails aboard BALI MOTU with the boaters that arrived the same day we did (*DENNELL* – Lainey #565, *Lady Charisma*, *Jolly Good*, and *Slow Dancing*). We had a great time at Bimini Sands Marina with our boating friends for a week.

We left Bimini early and traveled across the bank toward Chub Cay. Entering deeper water at the North West Light, we began fishing and lost Larry's pink and white lure with something that sliced the leader in half (first time we used that lure). Chub was still unfinished with no landscaping, but the pool was as nice as any upscale resort with the infinity edge. However, with the rate at \$4.35/ft and \$30 a day for electric - why would you stay there when you could stay at Atlantis for about the same price? We didn't feel like going to the restaurant as it didn't look too appealing (in one of the older buildings) and didn't feel like donating any more money to them.

We left around 7:00 AM and traveled through Nassau. Again Larry's secret black and green lure caught a 20 lb. and a smaller dolphin as well as a barracuda entering Nassau. We steamed straight through Nassau Harbor and anchored at Staniel Cay after dark. Yesterday was spent relaxing since Bob had irritated his back reeling in and cleaning the fish on the deck since they were too large for the counter on the back of our boat. Today he is better (but still has some pain) and we are going into Staniel Yacht Club to have lunch. The swimming pigs are still here, plus goats. We plan to stay here for a while hoping to meet up with some of our boating friends (please let us know where you are). Hope all is going well for everyone.

PS: If anyone plans to visit us, they have to bring the "secret plug."



PEDERSEN, Ole & Jan (#792) 1986 • DeFever 49 Pilothouse • EMMA JO Green Cove Springs, FL

EMMA JO Update

Thanks so much for your support and good thoughts for our 522-mile, 78-hour-on-the-nose passage from El Salvador to Mexico. Although in the grand scheme of things for cruisers, three and a half days doesn't seem like much, but it was the first time the two of us have been so long at sea alone on the boat, and undertaking this passage is something we have thought about, planned for, and sometimes worried about since we hatched this scheme to return to the Northwest. We monitored various weather sites including NOAA, www.passageweather.com, www.magicseaweed.com, www.windfinder.com, www.buoyweather.com, and took down weather faxes from the SSB radio for a few days before calculating that if we were going to do it, this would be the time. For the non-boaters, this Gulf averages at least a Force 6 wind for most of the year, and even ships are respectful of the conditions that can occur here. *Serenade of the Seas* (a large cruise ship) was hit with a 90-mile blow coming from here on one of its passages. When one of the weather faxes showed us a big low pressure in the Gulf of Mexico, meaning no easterly or northerly winds shooting through the Sierra Madre Mountains into Tehuantepec, we decided to go for it.

We left Barillas Marina in El Salvador at 6:50 in the morning on Thursday, April 15, and arrived at Marina Chahue in Huatulco at 12:45 in the afternoon on Sunday, April 19. We averaged 6.6 knots, ranging from 4.8 with a head current along the Salvadoran coast, then almost breaking out the water skis when we hurtled along at up to 7.7 knots in the Gulf itself. Sea conditions were relatively calm, with a long Pacific Swell of four to six feet every 12 or so seconds. The actual wind never got above 15 knots, and mostly was coming from the west and southwest. As we curved around the head of the Gulf though, there were a few periods when the wind was counter to the swells and we contended with a "hobby-horse" motion for a couple of hours, but conditions were not nearly as bad as we've experienced in the past, nor as bad as they could have been. The challenge was ensuring we each got rest, and we managed to take turns napping as needed every few hours such that we arrived here with mental clarity intact and not physically exhausted.

As it was Sunday when we arrived, the officials were not available for clearing in, so we're officially quarantined on the boat until they get here, some Mexican time this morning. We haven't yet decided if we're going to sit here at the marina until Ole flies back to work, or if we'll head 25 miles further north to play at an anchorage at Puerto Angel, returning here around May 1 – time and conditions will tell. I'll be updating the website in the next few days with the whole story, but we did want you know we're alive, well, happy and secure!

P.S. Gotta love Mexico. Immigration, customs and the health department just arrived, 27 hours late...
<http://www.emmajo.net/>



DEIN, Bob & Barbara (#2) 1999 • DeFever 44 • GONDOLA Venice, FL

Little Palm Island

GONDOLA spent some time in the Florida Keys during the spring of 2010. A week on a Boot Key mooring ball was pleasant, but a bit boring. Daily dockage rates in the Keys are uncomfortably high. Marathon Marina, near the Seven Mile Bridge is no exception, but the weekly and monthly rates are surprisingly low. So, we spent some time there, rented an Enterprise car, and became Tacky Tourists for a month. Note: Marathon Marina is where your Magazine Editor and spouse (#331) spend their winters, aboard ADVENTURES.

One of the many places that we had not seen in the Keys was Little Palm Island. Little Palm Island

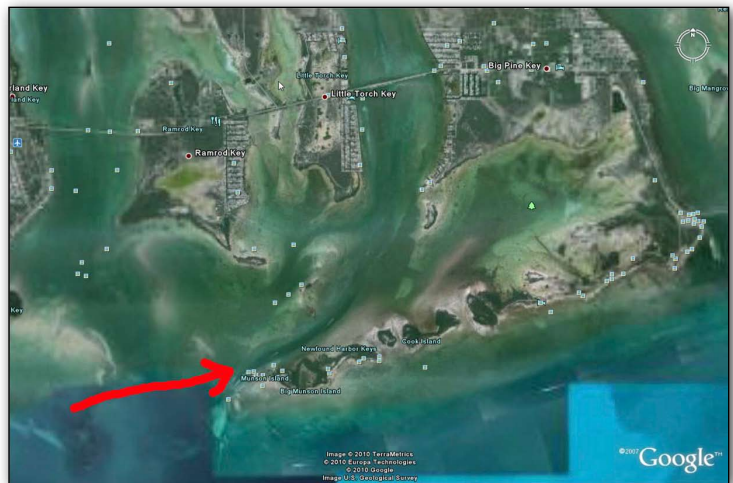


Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

is on maps as Munson's Island; and the name changed when it was developed as a resort. Historically, its main claim to fame is that it was the site of the filming of the movie, *PT 109*. One can visit by boat, or stay in rustic, south seas-like cottages. We never considered visiting the island, because it is... well, beyond expensive. Let's just call it *exquisitely* expensive.

So, we were surprised, and pleased, to find that Little Palm Island can be accessed by ferry for lunch. The island is at the entrance of Newfound Harbor, one of the better anchorages on the ocean side of the Keys. (Fig. #1) The resort has an office on Little Torch Key with charming ferries with the retro-appearance, reminiscent of a bygone era (Fig. #2). Surprisingly, the three mile ride to the island is free, and the boat is FAST. (Fig. #3)

A fifteen minute ride leads

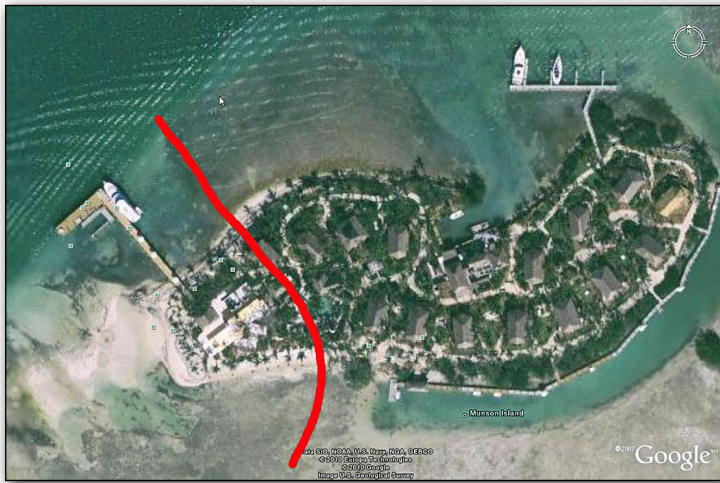


Fig. 4

to a dock near the southern tip of the island. Lunch guests are allowed on only a small portion of the five acre island. (figure #4) This includes the restaurant and beach area (the waters look like the Abacos) (Fig. #5, 6) The ultra exclusive cottages are strictly off limits. Oh yeah, guests are allowed to visit, and patronize, the gift shops, both on the island and at the shore side facility. Very thoughtful.

The main restaurant area is very tastefully done in a South Seas motif (at least I assume so, having never being in the South Seas). Fig. 7, 8, 9 As expected, the food was outstanding, as was the presentation. (Fig 10) While eating, Barbara was excited to see a Key Deer nuzzle right up to the back of her chair. (Fig. #11) Key Deer are the size of a large dog, and this one was as tame.

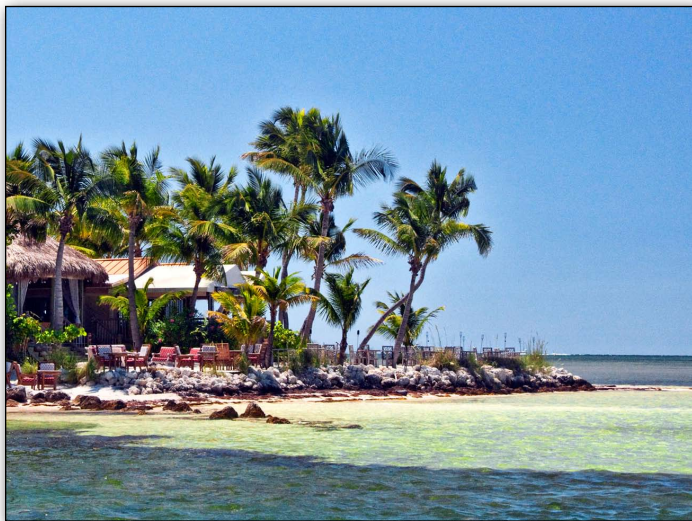


Fig. 5



Fig. 6

Well, this was our first (and last) \$90 lunch. But, we consider it a fee for four hours of entertainment, ferry ride, and EXCELLENT meals. Overall, a great experience.



Fig. 7



Fig 8

*More of Bob Dein's images of
Little Palm Island. . . .*



Fig 9



Fig 10



Fig 11



**BRYAN, Bob & Carol (#415)
Toronto, ON, Canada**

2001 • DF65 Grand Alaskan • CASSANDRA JADE II

Lucky Boaters in an Unlucky and Unexpected Situation

This was written to our children after the tornado to see if they could figure out where we were. They did not believe anything since it was sent on April Fools day. We had no idea what day it was when we sent it!!

We were planning our trip back to Fort Lauderdale when an unexpected event happened on Monday, March 30th, 2010.

After placing ou new DeFever flag on the front of CASSANDRA JADE II, we went inside to tidy up breakfast.

The sky turned dark and in the quiet still of the foggy morning, the wind came up suddenly and the quiet morning ended abruptly, when a dark cloud approached outside of the pilot house window. We hurried to look out the back door and then it hit with a vengeance. We were thrown to the floor and heard this unbelievable roaring wind sound. I asked one question of the Captain "my mate," I said what can we do? Unknown to us a tornado had ripped off all our lines but one and we were flipped onto our port side (we did not know how far at this point), a few seconds or minutes later we were floating again, but we needed to leave the dock, so Bob ran outside and jumped off the boat, unplugged the electrical cord and then ran back onto the boat and started the engines. I ran out and tried to get the last line off the back of the vessel, we

were originally in slip #528 now we were far off to the right and we were now on an angle towards slip #526. We were hitting pilings, cement, and debris and not yet in control of the vessel. Another boater came over and untied the last line, so I thought. Unknown to me, we were still not free! Then I heard someone yell and tell me, you have another line on the port cleat. I found it and had to throw it off the vessel quickly, as it was holding us back from leaving the dock area.

We finally got free and headed out to the canal and drove around until the wind subsided. Bob was driving on the top deck with the broken canvas and peering through two metal posts. He could hardly see in front of the vessel with the rain and blowing wind. We finally got back into one of the docks that was not damaged, and with a lot of help and some lines from the marina, we were safely tied. Now we could assess the situation.

We had hit one cement pier (so we thought) and broke off the front toe rail with the steel edging - the entire railing was sticking out about four feet from the front of our vessel. A large opening under the broken deck board was visible. The back of the vessel had been pushed into the cabin unseating the port side window and leaving an extensive dent in the fiberglass. The back corner that hit the dock also had extensive fiberglass damage. The canvas top only ripped on the outside edges and had no major damage but does need repair. We lost the dinghy cover, which was later retrieved wound up in the props of another boat in the marina (four docks away). At this point we cleaned up the one wine bottle that had fallen out and broken.

UNBELIEVABLE - everything inside was intact and nothing had even moved - the inside of the vessel was clean and neat as if nothing had happened. The lamps and dishes on the table had not moved. We went to the engine room and it was fine as well.

The large cupboard in the master bedroom had been unseated from the wall and Bob and I fixed it the next day. Even the cushions on the whole vessel were still sitting in their designated spots.

Our Marquipt stairs were lost, but a diver dove down and found them the next morning. They also were in perfect condition.

Now this is the amazing part of the story. The exterior of the vessel has extensive fiberglass and woodwork repair to be done above the water line and the window needs repairing, but we did not know that when we left the dock after the tornado we cruised right over slip # 527 with a 60' cement piling that we had broken off (18" thick by 4' wide pier - not a single cement piling but the whole pier)! The pier had sunk, turned upside down, and had four cement legs sticking up, and we drove right over it and did not touch it.

A diver checked out our underside the next day and informed us that everything was fine.

P.S. We would like give a thank you to "Shearwater" for the cocktail party the night of the tornado where we celebrated how lucky we all were.

We are still going to the Abacos for a couple of weeks, before we head back to Ft. Lauderdale for repairs.

The cement pier is probably what saved us from tipping right over and the fact that the lines broke, rather than taking out our cleats made that Monday our lucky day!!!!

We need to give a great deal of thanks to Bill the owner of "Sensations", the large vessel that was parked on the other side of our dock (that took out five pilings themselves). They said our bikes on the top deck touched the water when we were over on our port side and thought we were finished!! They even saw the tornado swirling right over our vessel and had their emergency equipment ready to get us out of our vessel if it was necessary.

Thanks to them we were able to get the last line off and to untangle the water line, because Bill had left one of his deck hands on the dock to assist us.

The boating community is a special group of individuals that came together in helping out each other. This kind of situation brings out the best in people!

Thanks also must be given to the staff at Grand Bahama Lucaya Yacht Club for being so helpful to all of us boaters.

There were no official warnings of the tornado and the Bahamas have had no reported Tornadoes - ever!





HEIN, Dick & Mary (#1189) 1979 • DeFever 43 • HEINSITE Green Cove Springs, FL

Log of MV HEINSITE

Aboard our previous DeFever, THE DORCAS HARDY, we made the Intracoastal Waterway trip to the Chesapeake Bay four times. While there were many surprises along the way over the years, all the trips were more or less uneventful, but this trip had events - more about those later. What follows is from our daily boat log:

May 1, 2010: We were up at the crack of dawn anxious to be underway and we departed the Ortega River Yacht Club Marina in Jacksonville (Statute Mile 760) at 0650. We arrived at our anchorage near the Jekyll Island marina at 1610. After Mary let out about 70 feet of chain, the electric windlass abruptly stopped working. This could be big trouble! One can retrieve the chain and anchor manually with a short handle, but the chain comes up at about six inches per stroke plus the chain is heavy and the anchor itself weighs about 50 pounds. If we had to reset the anchor during the night for example, it would be difficult and perhaps dangerous. I fiddled with the electrics but couldn't make it work again.

Fortunately, I had phone service and sent out a help message to one of the trawler owner organizations that I belong to. Advice was not long in coming and I was able to diagnose the problem - the solenoid was not functioning. I was also able to pass along our needs to Dick Marsh (#717 – DF44 AMBLE) back in Mill Valley, CA since Dick and Dede were going to be joining us in Charleston on May 6th and he could bring along a new solenoid.

May 2, 2010: After sleeping the sleep of the nervous, the windlass worked fine in the morning. We motored over to Brunswick GA to take on some fuel. We had called Ocean Petroleum to arrange for fuel on Sunday. They are normally open only Monday-Friday and their price was \$2.32 per gallon. On the phone the fellow promised to be there, but after hovering off his dock for an hour or so he was a no show. We gave up and went over to Brunswick Landing Marina where their price was \$2.86 per gallon so we just took on 100 gallons. This was the first time we put fuel in the boat and really wanted to fill it up, but not at \$2.86 a gallon.

We also had an appointment to meet a Georgia State Wildlife officer to examine our dinghy. The Bill of Sale for the dink which the broker provided when we bought the boat had a serial number that was somehow not correct. (We had called the broker's office and left a message but never did hear back from him.) The Ranger showed up promptly and issued a new hull number so we could get the dink registered.

We finally got out of Brunswick and made it through Little Mud River while there was still water in the channel. This stretch is infamous on the ICW. There are big tidal swings in Georgia, averaging around seven feet. Motoring on, we decided to anchor in Cattle Pen Creek even though it was low tide. The chart showed 14 feet at the entrance and I sailed in at about five knots. Suddenly the bow of the boat shot out of the water and I heard this horrible scratching sound - we had struck an obstruction of some sort - what a shock! I powered up and we got off whatever was down there but decided against anchoring that night, and instead we went into Kilkenny Marina. This is a small Marina a couple of miles off the ICW. The grounding gave us a slight vibration in the props, but we can continue.

May 3 2010: Departed Kilkenny Creek about 0930. We had a simply wonderful (and uneventful) day today. Sunny and warm.

May 4 2010: Arrived in Charleston about 1730 and we anchored off the Ashley Marina. We used to always stay at Ashley but the place went condo and the fees skyrocketed, so it's the hook for us.

May 5 2010: Slept in until 0800 and it's a nice sunny day. Chores. I put some caulk around a leaking door seam, adjusted the alternator belt on the port engine, pried a leaky knot of wood out of one of the teak strips on the aft deck, and installed a new bug screen on the port side salon door.

In the afternoon I was inside doing something and I heard Mary yell "DICK!!" in a way that tells me it's important. I ran out and saw that the anchor was dragging and we were about 15 yards from hitting the Ashley River Bridge. I quickly fired the engines and averted disaster. We reset the anchor to the east and well away from that bridge.

May 6 2010: We moved over to a slip at the Charleston Maritime Center, arriving about 1030. The \$1.50/foot here is the best deal in Charleston. We arranged for a diver to come over tomorrow and look at our props. In the afternoon we took a trolley ride and stopped at the Harris-Teeter grocery store for more provisions. Dick and Dede finally arrived about 1800. After some libations, we walked over the Fleet Landing restaurant. It is a very popular place and has quite good food.

May 7 2010: The diver scheduled for 1030 showed up at 0830. He took some pictures and reported no real damage to the bottom and just a couple of minor nicks in the props. I installed the new windlass solenoid that Dick Marsh kindly donated to us. In the installation process, I dropped one of three small screws that held small wires in place. Naturally, it fell into an inaccessible area, and naturally the old screws were a different size. So when Mary and Dede went to the grocery store, Dick and I went to the hardware store to get another screw. Well it seems the new screws are neither metric nor SAE. The guy at the hardware store suggested we try an electric store down the street, and naturally the electric store didn't have one either. However, Tommy the owner took pity on our plight and drove us to the Charleston Truck Center. This place was a jumble of buildings and functions. The owner, a retired Navy Chief, qualified for genuine character status. He had about a dozen shipping containers in the rear that contained a massive supply of everything automotive. Tommy figured if anyone had such a screwy screw as we had, this place would. We spent a couple of hours there and got quite a tour and some laughs but never could match up the screw. So the Chief fashioned a replacement out of brass, thinking that brass being softer than the steel in the solenoid, it would re-thread itself as I screwed it in. At this point Tommy had been with us now for about three hours so he gave us a ride back to the marina and said farewell. This is another case of people really helping us out when we needed it.

May 11 2010: Departed Wrightsville Beach at 0630. After passing the Onslow Beach Bridge, we had to wait for live fire exercises being held along the ICW in Camp Lejeune. We dropped the hook and watched as four camouflaged RIBs passed by, each heavily armed with maybe eight to ten marines aboard. They had guns all over those boats, and later we could hear them firing. There were the rapid fire smaller guns, then the slower, heavier sounding machine guns, followed by the chain guns letting loose. They were about a mile away and sound was quite loud. The chain guns have been described as sounding like ripping canvas. This is true, but much, much louder.

After about 90 minutes, they let us continue. Just past the site of the live fire, a bigger boat overtook us. I was expecting him to pass on the port side but he came quickly on the starboard. I got too far over and for the second time on this trip we were aground. Fortunately, it is mostly mud here and I was able to power through.

We went on to Swansboro and pulled into Dudley's Marina - a real bargain at \$0.75/foot. They also had a courtesy car which came in handy as by this time we were completely out of gin. We were serenaded in the evening by the sounds and pressure effects of artillery firing back at Lejeune. (*Note: they don't have live firing on the weekends. - Ed.*)

May 12, 2010: Departed Dudley's 0630 and it was another nice easy day. We pulled into Whittaker Point Marina in Oriental, North Carolina about 1300. Found a leak in the aft head - I wonder if the through-hull is leaking? The area under the sink is all wet. Earlier, the LP gas solenoid switch came apart. It is in an awkward place so it was a pain to figure out and repair.

May 13, 2010: We got a late start today for some unexplained reason. Calm morning gave way to a windy afternoon. We arrived at the anchorage in Belhaven and the anchorage was empty, which is unusual. It must be the increased cost of about everything which has resulted in really low traffic on the ICW - nothing like previous years.

In Belhaven, Mary pulled up the floor boards in the aft cabin and she found a lot of water - the bilge pump had failed, but where did the water come from in the first place? We used a hand pump to take out about 20-30 gallons. We had a big disruption over this and couldn't find out where so much water could come from although the sink in the aft head was suspect.

May 14 2010: Departed Belhaven anchorage at 0715 and it was a very nice warm day. I figured out where the leak was coming from! When we had new faucets installed the sink drain didn't exactly match the hose down to the through-hull fitting. The installer used a couple of hose clamps which let water flow down the drain just fine, but when we got in sloppy weather and water splashed up into the through-hull, it would shoot out the not-tight hose (we always put the plug in the drain under way). Each time the boat rolled to port, an amazing amount of water would shoot in. I wrapped the whole affair in duct tape which greatly reduced the ingress. A bigger, more permanent fix can wait.

May 15 2010: Departed Alligator River Marina 0600 for an early crossing of the Albemarle Sound, which can be rough later in the day. However, the wind had blown all night out of the west and so we encountered roly conditions - nothing serious, just uncomfortable. On the Albemarle, one must decide whether to continue on the regular ICW route to Norfolk or switch over to the alternate route, namely the Dismal Swamp. We have always preferred the latter and thought Dick and Dede would like to see it as well. However, in past trips, we had a single screw vessel with a protected prop. We opted for the Dismal Swamp route.

We arrived in Elizabeth City 1100 and found a slip at the free dock. E. City was having their annual Potato Festival. Downtown was full of vendors and they had a big bandstand set up. Here we encountered another of those episodes of people helping us out. We headed for the hardware store to get some rubber tape which I could use to stem the leak in our

sink drain. It seems the downtown hardware store had closed. Mary sought out someone in authority, in this case one of the Festival volunteers, to inquire about bus service. Naturally they had none, but Missy, one of the volunteers said she'd find us a ride. Missy was a teacher and found one of her past students and had him use her car to give us a ride. Dick and I went to Ace Hardware while Mary and Dede went to the grocery store. The kid waited till we were done and then gave us a ride back to the waterfront. Such nice, helpful people!

Later we got to watch a wedding which was held about 50 feet from us at a waterfront restaurant. The wedding party gathered on the dock to say their vows, and all the photos of the ceremony had us aboard HEINSITE in the background. Later, about 100 feet off our stern, the Coast Guard put on a demonstration of their helicopter lifesaving maneuvers. They would throw out a dummy and then lower their guy into the water to retrieve it. Interesting.

May 16, 2010: Departed E. City docks about 0800 and had a nice trip up the Pasquotank River. This is a very narrow, winding, scenic river. We made the 1100 opening of the South Mills lock. Enroute we bumped several objects along the bottom. In retrospect, we probably should not have taken on the last load of fuel and water. In any case, toward the end of the canal, we struck something hard and immediately had severe prop vibration on the port engine. Using the port engine at 1200 RPM and the starboard at 1600 we were able to get up to Great Bridge. We tied up at the free dock across from Atlantic Yacht Basin and we'll have the props checked tomorrow.

May 17, 2010: Went to Atlantic Yacht Basin and had the boat hauled. Both props were really badly damaged. I don't know how we had so little vibration on the starboard side. The yard pulled the props and sent them out to be rebuilt. They put the boat back in the water and put us behind a large yacht inside a shed. Well, we were half in and half out. It was a rainy day and we just sort of hung around. Props may be done tomorrow but probably more likely Wednesday.

May 18, 2010: We went out and sampled the local bus service, and we bought all-day passes. We rode for a while and got off, had lunch, then went to the grocery store. After shopping, Mary, Dede, and I got back on the bus while the store took Dick and the groceries back to the marina. We were at the bus stop at 3:45 for the 4:00 bus, which broke down and never arrived. We are tenacious however, and caught the 5:00 bus. The plan was to ride the bus into Norfolk and then just ride it back.

When we got to Norfolk, the driver informed us that the bus did not go back out to Great Bridge, so we were stuck in a big transfer center in a less than desirable neighborhood. The driver referred us to a supervisor who was nearby. Once again people helped us out. The supervisor gave us a ride to a different bus stop where we got on another bus that took us to a shopping center about five miles from Great Bridge. We had created a bit of a stir in the bus system. We could hear them talking on the radio about the "three transfers". When we arrived at the last bus, the driver was all ears about how it came to be that a supervisor delivered us to the stop. From the shopping center, we got a cab back to the boat. Dick Marsh was nicely mellow by this time.

May 19, 2010: We went to Kelley's for lunch, and the props arrived at 1330. The boat was splashed at about 1630, and the total cost was \$1229.00 - not nearly as bad as I feared. We made the 1700 bridge/lock opening and took off for the anchorage at Hampton VA, arriving there in the dark about 2030. There was another DeFever at anchor there, but we couldn't tell which one.

May 22, 2010: We were up at 0600 and we dropped Dick and Dede off. They had to drive back to Norfolk to get their flight home. They were aboard for 16 days and the time just flew - such good company! We continued on to Baltimore arriving about 1100. It's really nice to be back in our old stomping grounds.

May 23, 2010: Slept late, up at 0900. We moved the boat to another slip, behind the hotel. Here we are outboard on the main dock and have an unobstructed view of the opposite shore - a great spot. Lots of liveaboards are here and several came over and said hello - a very friendly group. Later we walked into Fells Point. Fells is still a popular spot with lots of tourists and tourist type services, restaurants, etc. abound. It has a welcome air of familiarity for us, even though it has been nearly six years since we have been here. Went to the grocery store and stopped at Bonaparte Bakery/Café for some treats. Mary made a nice chicken parmesan over spaghetti for dinner.

Well, the boat is docked and probably will stay at rest for a while except for some over-nighters. We booked our slip through the end of the year, and we have lots of boat chores to do but we'll just work half a day and play the other half. Or so we plan. Life is good.



Impressions of First-Time Cruising in the Bahamas

I know that a lot of DFC members are “old hands” when it comes to the Bahamas, but there are still a lot of folks who have never been over there and the intent of this article is to share some things that we found interesting or useful-to-know on our first trip this spring. We spent a wonderful nine weeks traveling with Dan and Carol Rohr (#665, *LUCKY STARS*). Most of our cruise was spent in the Exumas as far south as Little Farmers Cay so information will be focused more on that area, but we paused briefly in Eleuthera and cruised through the Abacos as we headed back towards Florida so we’ll try to touch on those places too. Except for the first night when we checked into the country, we spent the entire 67 days at anchor. Here’s a rough map of the Bahamas and the Exumas and the overall route that we took.



Bahamas trip route



Exumas map

The Exumas are the chain in the south-central part of the Bahamas, and they are more remote and less crowded with unbelievable crystal blue water. If you really love nature and natural beauty, the Exumas are the place for you. I’ve heard them described as the “Do It Yourself Islands”, and that’s a good description. If you really need something you’re not more than about 40 nm from a town with an airport (Nassau or Staniel Cay, for instance). The Abacos are much more populated and developed, and the water isn’t as clear or pretty as the Exumas. The Abacos can be a bit like “spring break for the over-50 set”, and more crowded with charter boats and faster boats from Florida on weekend or week-long trips. Eleuthera is somewhere in between, though we only stopped at Spanish Wells and Harbour Island. The biggest problem we had with the Bahamas is that there are SO many places to explore it’s easy to become paralyzed with indecision. The biggest constraints are water depth and finding anchorages that will provide protection from the wind and sometimes the swell that can wrap around the islands.

Just remember that “Cay” is pronounced “key” and you’ll sound like a seasoned cruiser!

When to Go

We chose to go over in the spring since the winter months can be very windy. We’d rather enjoy the more settled weather that’s typical in the spring and early summer than the often windy conditions typical for the winter months. We saw a lot of boats leaving the Bahamas to head back to the US after spending the winter and it’s a shame - the weather was finally starting to get nice. It was good news for us since we like less crowded places.

Guide books and charts

Explorer Charts are a MUST – we had them in electronic and paper form for all three regions: Near Bahamas (for the Abacos), Exumas, and Far Bahamas (needed for Eleuthera). The paper chart books have useful notes and information about various settlements and areas as well as accurate charts. We have two electronic chart systems – a computer running the Cap’n and a Furuno plotter on our NavNet, both running Explorer charts.

We found the Steve Pavlidis “Exuma Guide” to be very useful, and for the Abacos the Steve Dodge book is very good. We had a copy of the latest Waterway Guide for the Bahamas, but it was pretty light on useful information.

For a little flavor of the Islands, read the book “Out Island Doctor” and its sequel “My Castle in the Air” by Evans Cottman – they are charming, sweet tales of the Bahamas from another time.

Navigation

The water in the Bahamas is either insanely deep (thousands of feet) or fairly skinny, with very little in between.

Because of this, navigation in much of the Bahamas is by eye – you read the color of the water to gauge depths or at least discriminate between shallow and deep areas. Although we’ve spent a lot of time in the Florida Keys, we were still a bit daunted by the idea of depending on a largely-untested skill! Once we got the hang of it though, it’s really quite easy when the sun is overhead and the water surface isn’t too choppy. The Explorer Charts often refer to “visual piloting areas”, which are very typical. The deeper the shade of blue, the deeper the water is. In shallows, a brownish color usually indicates grass, and black/yellow typically indicates coral. Pay attention to the charts, and keep your eyes open. Don’t traverse shallow areas at night or early/late in the day, and if you’re transiting an area with a lot of scattered coral heads (such as Yellow Bank SE of Nassau), you might not want to do it on a heavily overcast day. If you pay attention, it’s not difficult at all. I found it much more daunting when we were zipping along in the dinghy since we were going fast, and didn’t have the benefit of a flying bridge to get a nice high angle of view. I slowed down often until I gained more confidence reading the water from the dinghy.

Weather

We used WeatherFax and satellite phone weather service as our primary weather sources. When we had web access we used that as well. Our SSB wasn’t working well on this trip so we couldn’t hear Chris Parker’s broadcasts in the morning, but LUCKY STARS’ used their SSB to listen to Chris and they monitored their XM Weather on the Garmin chartplotter – we shared information and analysis daily to take advantage of the various sources.

Communications, Internet, and Entertainment

The VHF radio is often used in lieu of a cell phone and you will hear all manner of strange calls on 16. In Canada we set our radios to “International” mode, but in the Bahamas leave your radio in U.S. mode. Channel 16 is used the same way we’re used to, but other channels are a bit of a free-for-all.

We put our Verizon cell phones on “vacation hold” for two months, so we had to rely on satellite phone (\$1.29/minute) for keeping in touch with our Dads and for emergencies, SSB radio, and marine VHF radio. I know people have used unlocked GSM phones or other cellular options (check the Forum archives for information) but those still require a nearby cell tower, and in the Exumas that was not always available. We needed “anywhere” communication since we cruise to farther-flung places so the investment in the sat phone was worth it for us. You can also rent a sat phone if your need is limited. We also subscribed to an email service through our sat phone that allowed us to send/receive simple text emails anywhere.

Wi-Fi is available in some areas – much more so in the Abacos than the Exumas. In the Exumas, there was rumor of Wi-Fi at MacDuff’s on Normans Cay, but they will tell you it’s down whether it is or not. There is fairly reliable Wi-Fi at Warderick Wells Park in both the North and the Emerald Rock anchorages, but it is very slow and Skype is not allowed. Cost is \$10 for 24 hours or 100MB, whichever comes first. The only other Wi-Fi we could get was in Big Majors anchorage near Sampson and Staniel Cays - \$10 for 24 hours or 200 MB, whichever comes first (no Skype allowed). At Black Point Settlement (Exumas) you need to bring your laptop to Lorraine’s Café and you make a donation towards the cost of the slow connection. If you plan to anchor and you want Internet, you need a good Wi-Fi amplifier – we had great success with the one recommended by Jeff and Karen Siegel (#615) from IslandTime PC (<http://www.islandtimepc.com/>). If you like to stop at marinas, the few marinas in the Exumas usually offered some form of slow internet.

In the Abacos, Out Island Internet (www.abacoinet.com) offers pretty good service throughout most of the more populated cruising areas – from Little Harbour up to Treasure Cay (south to north), but nothing NW of Treasure. The speed was very good with Skype allowed, and the cost was \$10/day or \$35/week. In Spanish Wells, Eleuthera we were able to pick up a local open Wi-Fi access point for a slow connection.

For entertainment, we were able to receive Sirius satellite radio and DirecTV feeds with no



Adventures

trouble (we went as far south as Little Farmer’s Cay in the Exumas).

Anchoring

On the advice of Hank Haeseker (#22), Steve and Di Koch (#74), and other seasoned Bahamas cruisers, we used an 88 lb. Delta anchor for the Bahamas sand, and we couldn’t have been more pleased. The anchor grabbed well and held nicely against our usual power-set at 1100-1200 RPMs in reverse. This is not to say that other anchors might not also work, but we slept better following well-tested advice. One thing to note is that there can be areas where there is a very thin layer of sand on top of marl or a rock-hard scoured bottom. An anchor tip can catch in a hole in this type of bottom and appear to hold, but a shift in wind direction or current can dislodge it from its tenuous toe-hold. It’s a good idea to snorkel on your anchor or take a look at it with your “lookee bucket” (more on that later) to see that you have a good set.

Provisions

We stocked up before we left Florida so that we wouldn’t need to stop at a grocery store along the way. Using the green produce bags I managed to get romaine lettuce to last for four weeks, and a few tomatoes lasted that long as well. The first time we encountered a “grocery store” in the Exumas was in Staniel, and we had been out for over a month by the time we got there. Staniel has the Pink Store, Blue Store, and Isles General Store, but their stock is very sparse and your best chance is on the day the mailboat comes (about once a week). By the next morning most of the limited fresh produce is probably gone. Groceries are very expensive since everything comes by mailboat from Nassau. Beer is about \$50/case. Nothing is a “good deal” over there.

Water and Trash

We have a watermaker that we can use to convert clean sea water to drinkable water; otherwise we’d have to buy water (20-50 cents per gallon). The islanders have to make their fresh water supply by running a generator to power a shore-side watermaker, so nothing is free. We carry plenty of water, but we still tried to be mindful about our consumption. If you don’t currently have a watermaker, I would point out that the cost and hassle of maintaining a watermaker is not trivial so unless you plan to spend many seasons in the islands it’s probably cheaper to just buy water when you need it. There are sufficient marinas in the Exumas that you would have no trouble finding one as you cruised along, and the more populous Abacos and Eleuthera would be no problem as well.

Trash is another thing we can’t take for granted. We got rid of a lot of extra packaging when we vacuum packed and stowed food before we left the States, to help reduce the amount of trash we would create. We also used cloth napkins and other little tricks to reduce.



lookee bucket

You have to pay to bring bags of trash ashore, and the islanders usually burn most trash. We sorted our trash into recyclables (which we brought back to the States for recycling) and that which can be burned, and we were careful to rinse out containers and to separate food scraps so the trash didn’t get stinky since we had to live with it a lot longer. Food scraps were collected in a container kept in the refrigerator or freezer, and dumped (legally) overboard in deep water during passages. Never dump your food scraps or fish cleaning debris in an anchorage – it teaches the fish (particularly sharks) to associate boats with food, and that’s not a good thing for you or for others who want to anchor there. It makes the prospect of a nice afternoon swim a bit more daunting.

Useful Things to Have

Before we got to the Exumas we built a “lookee bucket” - a bucket with a clear bottom that you can stick in the water to see what’s under the boat. It’s handy for checking the set of your anchor and looking for good snorkel spots – we used ours many times a day.

The prevailing wind is from the SE, which means that your stern will most often be exposed to the hot late day sun. We were VERY glad to have a textilene screen that wraps around the cockpit

to give us nice shade and help keep the boat cool. We also have Sunbrella awnings for the foredeck and for the boat deck, and they were very effective at reducing heat in the boat. (We wrote an article about our various awnings in a previous DFC Magazine.)

Quick-dry shirts – particularly the long sleeved kind were very nice to protect us from the strong sun while out in the dinks or snorkeling for hours. They are under \$20 from places like Modells or Sports Authority (we like the Russell Dri-Power). They dry quickly, and if it's hot you can just dunk it in water and put it back on – it will keep you nice and cool.

Big brimmed hats are a must, with chin straps to keep them on when zipping along in the dink. Cheap white towels are nice to put across your legs when in the kayak or dinghy, and are also good for sitting on the beach. Cheaper ones are less absorbent, so they dry more quickly. A beach umbrella is nice for shade – something small enough to carry folded up in the dink without too much trouble. We had picnic lunches on the beach many days, and shade is a necessity.

If you plan to snorkel, you might invest in some type of shorty wetsuit or thin (2mm) full suit, since the water can be cool from the winter months. If you do nothing else get a lightweight hood to keep your head warm – that will make a big difference in your comfort. We spent long hours in the water snorkeling and it was easy to get cold. An exposure suit also protects you from sunburn. If you're interested in snorkeling but are not experienced, I highly recommend that you take a snorkeling class from a local dive shop before you go on your trip – a few hours in the pool with an instructor will improve your enjoyment considerably.



Sunken Druggie DC-3



Shroud Cay creeks

Dinghy

In addition to a bow anchor, you'll find it's good to have a small stern anchor for your dinghy. It was very common to toss out a stern anchor when tying to a town dock to keep boats from drifting under the dock and from getting tangled. I wish people would use that technique at dinghy docks elsewhere – it works well.

We carried three 5-gallon gas cans, plus the 6-gallon tank in the dinghy. We bought gas in Staniel southbound and northbound – 10 gallons each time, and we ended up using about 45 gallons over the nine week trip. We used the dinghies every day, and weren't shy about traveling great distances.

Our Trip - Exumas Bound

We crossed the Gulf Stream from Key Biscayne to South Bimini, stopping at the Bimini Sands Marina to clear Customs and relax. Our original plan was to continue on past Bimini and anchor out on the Great Bahama Bank overnight, but we weren't sure about the winds so we decided to stop and proceed the next day.

We had a little time in the later afternoon to explore Bimini so we walked to the north end of the island and took a water taxi over to North Bimini - a distance of about 150 yards. People were very friendly and smiling, and the water was so blue that it reflected turquoise off the bottom of the puffy white clouds... lovely. We walked through Alice Town and Bailey Town, stopping at the little liquor store for some Bahamian rum (Dan got coconut and I got

mango), and then we stopped at “Three Daughters” Deli run by a lovely lady who fixed us nice wraps and sandwiches while watching “Law & Order” reruns on satellite TV.

The next morning we left early for the long trip across the Great Bahama Bank – about 80 miles of “desert” – a shallow, sandy plain 7-10’ deep. At the eastern end of this “plain”, the water plummets from 15’ down to 3000+’ as we entered the Tongue of the Ocean. We ran in the deep for about an hour, and then tucked in to anchor behind Frazers Hog Cay in the Berry Islands just after sunset. The next day we dinked over to the tiny marina and bar/restaurant called the “Berry Islands Club”. The name makes it sound big, but it’s just a speck of a place... friendly and nice though. With some advance notice (you radio ahead if you want to eat there, and tell them what you want), we had a nice lunch on the porch.

The weather finally settled enough for us to travel the remaining 75 miles to the northern end of the Exuma chain. We headed back out into the Tongue of the Ocean, cut through Nassau Harbor (call the Harbor Master on the radio to request passage), and turned south through Yellow Bank into the Exuma chain to anchor off Highborne Cay. We were going to anchor between Allen’s and Leaf Cays, but it was crowded and we felt it was a bit constricted for the big boat. We took the dinghies there the next day, and really enjoyed exploring and seeing the iguanas on Leaf Cay. Unfortunately, the iguanas are used to being fed by humans, so they are pretty assertive approaching people looking for food. Don’t be afraid of them, but I wouldn’t feed them - it’s not good for them and you’ll avoid the risk of being bitten accidentally.

We did a lot of snorkeling, jumping in the dinghies and looking for dark (black, not brown) patches that indicate coral. Between exploring in the dink, hiking, and snorkeling we kept very busy!

It was a short 10 nm cruise down to Normans Cay, which was very pretty. We dinked around the south end and up into the basin to snorkel the wrecked DC-3 airplane from the island’s days as a drug haven. We went ashore and walked around the south end of the island, exploring the old druggie’s dock and abandoned houses. We stopped at the “Normans Cay Beach Club” with MacDuff’s Restaurant – two or three little brightly painted houses right next to the airstrip and the beach (closed on Mondays). Prices for drinks and food in the cute little restaurant were rather high - \$11 for a jumbo hot dog with fries, \$18 for a cheeseburger and fries, and most other things were higher than that, so we passed. We found some wonderful snorkeling spots around the north end of the island.

It’s a short cruise south into the Exuma Land and Sea Park (about 22 miles long) to Shroud Cay, which has several mangrove creeks to explore. We took the dinks to the northernmost creek where motorized boats are allowed (all the other creeks are for paddling only), but it must be done on a rising tide, about one hour before high since there are some real skinny spots in there, and we had to raise the motor a few times. The beach on the ocean side was just stunning and the sand was like a cross between sugar and flour. We hiked to the top of Driftwood Camp, where law enforcement used to spy on the druggies going into Normans, and the view was amazing. Long-tailed tropic birds gamboled across the sky – they must



Norman’s Cay Beach



Jim on Hawksbill Cay

have had nests on the little island just to the NE.

Just a note: we found that the distances between islands were often so short that we just towed our dinghy (we tow at about six knots), and we only lifted the dink for longer runs or when the conditions were more frisky.

We headed down to Hawksbill Cay to stay out of the swell, and the moorings are close in to the beach, which is really pretty. Within the Park boundaries, moorings are common and the cost depends on the boat length (\$20 for 49'). You can anchor outside of the mooring field, but we decided to support the Park where we could.



Shroud Cay kayaking

Warderick Wells is the island with the Exuma Park headquarters, and arrangements for moorings (and to get on the waiting list a day in advance) is at 0900 on VHF 09 every day. Even if the Park doesn't sound like it's busy, call a day ahead and get on the waiting list if you can. The "North" mooring field is very close to the Park Headquarters building, and the "Emerald Rock" field is a bit farther away, but there's more room and no current (nicer for swimming). The "South" mooring field is limited in space and by weather/sea conditions – it's easier to run over there by dinghy from Emerald Rock.

We highly recommend snorkeling Brad's Reef at Long Cay – lots of elkhorn coral and lots of pretty stuff all up and down the Cay. They say it's a good dive site, but there wasn't anything in the deep area that you couldn't also see in the shallows.

We hiked many of the trails on Warderick Wells (get a trail map at Headquarters), and it's amazing to see the limestone that the islands are made of. The stone is sharp and jagged, pockmarked with holes of all diameters and depths, some with trapped dirt and water and trees growing out of them. There is a lot of vegetation, and the ever-present curly-tailed lizards. The island also has a lot of hutia – a rat-sized rodent that's native to the Bahamas, but not native to this island. A tiny population brought here some years ago has swelled to 5000, and they're now a problem, eating all the underbrush. It's rare to see them unless you're on the island after dark. We were amazed to see how much work has been done by volunteers over the years to create all these trails – a huge effort in a tough environment.

One of the Exuma traditions is to make a sign out of driftwood with your boat's name on it and place it up on



Fat Nurse Sharks at Compass Cay Marina

Boo Boo Hill at Warderick Wells. Nearby there are blow holes that are well worth visiting – especially at high tide. Hiking on Warderick Wells can be challenging – the trail map doesn't rate or grade the various trails, but those south of the Headquarters building can be quite challenging, sometimes requiring hands to assist in the scramble up or down. Good hiking boots are a must if you want to venture farther than Boo Boo Hill, Causeway, Hutia, or Shady Tree trails. We also suggest that you carry a VHF radio in case of problems because you are so remote, and bring lots of water (more than you think you need).

Compass Cay was slightly daunting to get into (though plenty of big boats go in and out of there) – you come off the bank and head towards the N end of the island, but then

round a mark and make a hairpin turn to the south, turning left into the marked dredged channel towards Compass Cay Marina. We anchored outside of the marina, between Compass and Pipe Cays. The current can be brisk but the holding is good. We took a long dink ride down Pipe Creek, exploring Joe, Thomas, Overlynder, Rat, and Little Pipe Cays. There's a lot of development activity on Overlynder, and there are some gorgeous homes and a private marina on Little Pipe – it's a private residence island, but it's sure set up well for hosting a lot of guests in pish-posh style. We found some patch reefs on the south end of Pipe to snorkel, and then had a picnic lunch on a little beach, then explored the old Navy Decca station. We went back to the boats to shower and headed to Compass Cay Marina for a burger (cook's night out!) and to see their pet sharks. There are about 10 nurse sharks and various grouper and bonefish that get fed regularly, and they come right over when a dinghy comes to the marina. We dinked up to the N end of Compass and walked to Rachel's Bubblebath – very fun to experience at high tide. Then we snorkeled the coral gardens and visited the caves at Rocky Dundas at low tide late in the day (best at low tide).

The anchorage near Staniel Cay is Big Majors Spot, with the famous "piggy beach" at the south end. Feral pigs will swim out to your dinghy when you approach, so be careful not to get into water shallow enough for them to stand in, or they will try to climb in your dinghy with their sharp hooves! You can tie your dink up at the Staniel Cay Yacht Club, or at the free dink dock at Isles General Store – up the little creek past the (closed) Happy People Marina, all the way at the end. Staniel is a good place to get snail mail sent reliably from the States via Watermakers Air. Have your mail forwarded to Watermakers in Fort Lauderdale, and they will ship it to Staniel by air for about \$35. Watermakers Air is also a good service if you need to fly back to the States.

At Staniel, Thunderball Cave is a fabulous snorkel – don't miss it! It was even more fun than we imagined. Head over there about 45 minutes - one hour before low slack – the tide seems to turn early, and the crowds will come at slack – so you get the real slack water and you avoid the bulk of the crowds.

Bitter Guana Cay is just south of Staniel, and it's an absolutely gorgeous isolated anchorage. This island also has a population of iguanas – they are protected, so do NOT feed them! We got to know some of the researchers from Shedd Aquarium who have been studying this population since the late 80's and we learned a lot about these creatures.

A few miles to the south is Black Point Settlement on Great Guana Cay. You can take your dinghy to the public pier or to the dock at the Laundramat (sic), next to Lorraine's Café and Internet. We got a loaf of the famous coconut bread and cinnamon bread to freeze and take home – usually you order it a day ahead. The town isn't much – but the people were nice. Lorraine's Friday night BBQ was good - \$15 for a big plate of ribs and sides – generous portions and everything was really tasty. We didn't try any of the other restaurants – most places want you to call ahead by radio if you want dinner so they can plan accordingly. We anchored south of White Point for more exploring, and got as far as Little Farmers Cay before it was time to start heading north.

We worked our way back up through the Exumas, revisiting a few favorite spots and stopping at Cambridge Cay. We made some nice dives along the sheer walls as we cruised up through North Ship Channel Cay on our way to Eleuthera.

On the advice of Dennis and Nellie Lainey (#565), we headed to Spanish Wells in Eleuthera – a good place to stop for fuel since it's a commercial fishing port. We enjoyed the town with a well-stocked grocery store and some shops – a treat that we didn't find in the Exumas. We took the high-speed ferry over to Harbour Island for the day to see the lovely pink beach and explore the island a bit. It was a great trip and we highly recommend it. If you want to take your boat, hire a local pilot (about \$50) to guide you there, through the Devil's Backbone. It's cheap insurance.

Spanish Wells is a good jumping-off point to head to the Abacos, though the passage past Ridley Head and out to the ocean can be daunting. Be sure to wait for good overhead light, or hire a pilot to guide you out through the narrow coral cut.

We came into the Abacos near Little Harbor and spent about a week and a half working our way up to Green Turtle Cay, stopping at Hope Town with its distinctive lighthouse, Man-O-War Cay (everything is closed on Sundays), and Great Guana (to visit the famous Nippers and Grabbers). As we've mentioned before, we found those areas a bit crowded and populated (a shock



Dan and Horse Conch

compared to the quiet of the Exumas), though it was nice to have little towns to explore for a change. The water was more green than crystal blue, but still nice. We ran into Linda and Gary March (#1103) aboard MARCH WINDS IV (GA 60) and spent a few nice days touring and snorkeling with them.

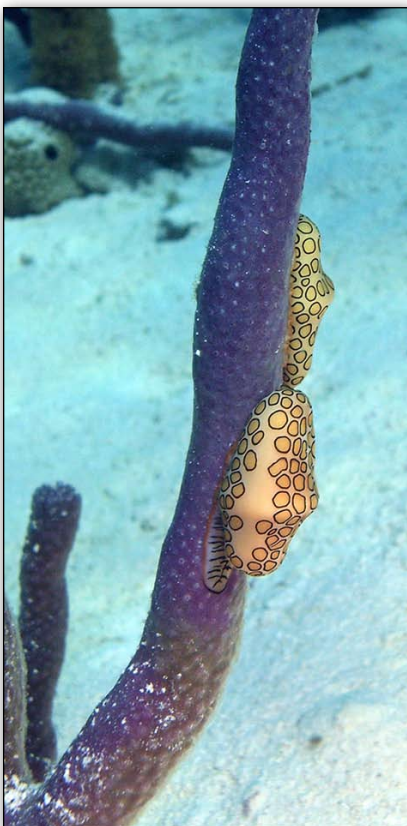
We worked our way northwest and stopped at the more remote Allens-Pensacola Cay for snorkeling, and LUCKY STARS made it over to Moraine Cay to snorkel – saying that it was some of the best snorkeling they’ve ever done. We anchored at Old Yankee Cay, then at Mangrove Cay to prepare to cross back to the States. It’s an easy hazard-free cruise to the Little Bahama Bank waypoint, then across the Gulf Stream to Fort Pierce. U.S. Customs was painless with our Local Boater Option cards and an electronic float plan under the new Small Vessel Reporting System. We can’t wait to go back to the Exumas again!



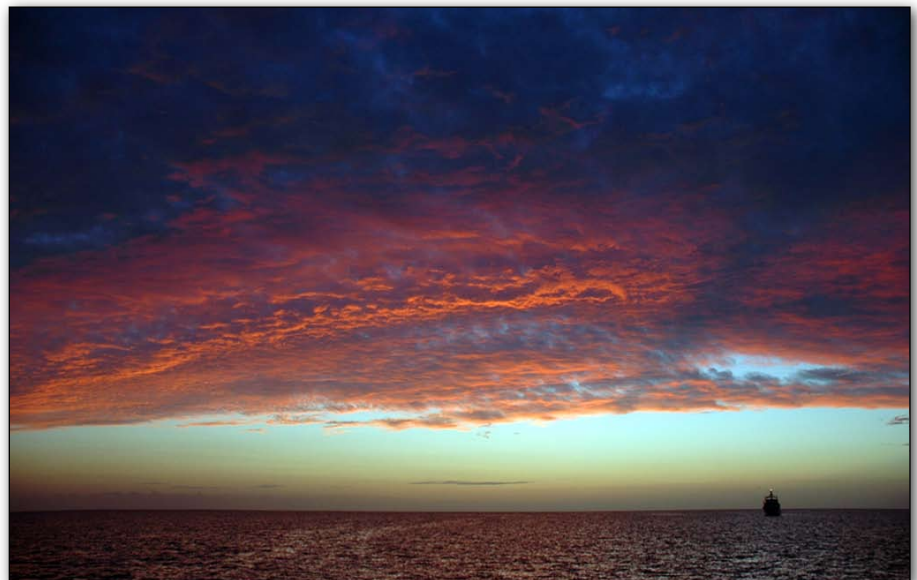
Stingray



Juvenile Queen Angelfish



Flamingo Tongue Snails



Sunset