

I usually sail up to the islands each year with a club called the Island Cruising Association, who organise cruises each year: one to Tonga, one to Fiji and one to Noumea. Thirty-nine yachts went from the Bay of Islands to Tonga, 12 to Fiji, and 8 to Noumea. This year (2000) we elected to join the Fiji group, who were supposed to go to the Iou Group of islands, which is between Tonga and the main Fiji group. Normally you have to get a special permit from Suva to visit this group, and the government only allows about six yachts at a time to go there. The Island Cruising Association got permits for us to make our first call there, provided we paid for Customs etc to fly in for the formalities of entry. Unfortunately, the coup happened two weeks before we were due to leave NZ. As our permit was issued by the 'outed' Prime Minister, we had it cancelled.

We went straight to Savu Savu, a great spot on the east coast of Vete Lavu, and which is a port of entry. We spent three weeks in this area, then worked our way down through Bligh Water to Latoka, another port of entry. Next came Musket Cove for Fiji Regatta Week. This is run by Dick

Smith's family, who own Musket Cove resort. This is a great week, with races to other island resorts every other day. The final event is the Musket Cove to Port Vila Rally, which is a run of about 560 miles. The finish is organised by the Vanuatu Cruising Yacht Club, who man the finishing line 24 hours per day until the last boat arrives. Each boat receives a hamper of local fruit, a six-pack of local beer and French bread. There was a great prize night at the Rossi Restaurant and Bar, and every yacht got a prize. It was quite a welcome to Vanuatu.

Vanuatu is still my favourite group of islands, particularly those to the north of the group. We usually cruise there until the end of October, before heading back to New Zealand. Why NZ? It's the greatest summer cruising ground I know, particularly the east coast of the North Island, and it's much easier to sail north to the islands from there than it is from Adelaide.

For David Wright's map of Don Morton's earlier wanderings in 1992, see *Squadron Quarterly* June 1993: 29-33, in which Don described his experiences up to that time.

SD

A shark intervenes in the Plympton Cup



A regatta at Glenelg in about 1929, with the unfinished breakwater (Rymill Collection)

The historic Plympton Cup, which was presented in the early 1880s by the late Captain Morish of Plympton, was sailed at Glenelg on Saturday, February 9th. This handsome trophy is valued at £75 and is for perpetual competition. The race is conducted annually by the Holdfast Bay Yacht Club. This year it attracted only four starters — *Alexa* (Major JM Irwin), *Norallie* (Capt TM Hardy), *Lady Alice* (IE Winterbottom) and *Valkyrie* (W Horricks). The yachts finished in that order, and *Alexa* had an easy win from scratch.

An exciting incident occurred during the race. As *Valkyrie* was nearing the caissons of the unfinished Glenelg breakwater, the skipper, Mr W Horricks, heard frantic cries for help from a frail canvas canoe close to the breakwater. He promptly changed the course of his yacht, and

when close up found a young lady in bathing costume in a state of collapse, and a man similarly attired striking frantically with a broken paddle at a 12 ft blue pointer shark, which on several occasions had rushed the canoe and been frightened off with the splash of the paddle.

The fins and half the body of the monster were seen by the yachtsmen as they approached, and the water round the canoe was lashed to foam. The shark made off when the yacht arrived. The couple were hauled aboard the yacht, and later sent ashore in a motor launch. There is no doubt that had Mr Horricks not pulled out of the race and so forfeited any chance of winning the Cup, a ghastly tragedy would have been enacted.

The Australian Motor Boat and Yachting Monthly, 1929; 4 (No 11, March): 5.

SD

Some of AG Rymill's shark experiences in Nyroca

1892 January 4th.

Lost the dinghy's paddles today, but don't know how. [We] had them on deck, so suppose they slipped overboard. Glass pretty low tonight. Started off with the *Shona* for the fishing ground off Cape D'Estaing. Here we got some fine salmon fishing, which is real [sic] good sport, but they are very dry eating. Left the *Shona* in the afternoon & started for Dashwood Bay (where I am now writing). There is a nasty swell coming into this Bay and the old *Nyroca* is laying broadside on, rolling about like the duce [sic]. This is a frightful place for sharks. We have already caught two, fully the size of a well-grown man. Just now we heard a lot of water dashing about like the sea breaking over a rock, & on going on deck saw a huge shark with one of the dead ones in his mouth, which he had just grabbed off our counter.

Friday 30th [December] 1892

After breakfast we made for Donnington Head with a strong south westerly wind blowing. Got here at 12. Plenty of fishing was obtained, & also a shark about 10 ft long. As we were running low in the bread line, we were obliged to return to the jetty for the night.

Thursday 4th February [1897]

Went to Schnapper Rock. Good fishing; 1 small shark caught & an immense one after [illegible] small shark hook got away — like most big fish.

In the evening sailed across to bay just inside the first point, where we lay that night.

Friday 5th February [1897]

Went back again to Schnapper Rock & put a large shark hook (Winnininnie [?] manufacture) in the hopes of getting the large sharks above mentioned and it was not long before the drum used as a buoy was bobbing up & down. It turned out that the big fellow was not on, but one [which] turned out to be 9-ft 8-in when measured on board was attached, was securely attached to the Hook. (with a large H) When triced up alongside the mast with the jib halyard a few snap shots were taken of it — with what success remains to be seen.

In the evening sailed to Pt Lincoln as two of the party have to catch the *Ferret* to proceed to Adelaide.

SD

*Saturday - 6th Feb Mr R + J. Rymill
by 7.40 AM A.S.P. + E.S.P. sailed the
"Poker" back to Port Adelaide where
they arrived on Thursday 11th Feb. 97*



THE SHARK



AT CAPE DONNINGTON

1897

AG Rymill's big shark, caught at Cape Donnington, 5 February 1897. (Nyroca log)