

STRICTLY FOR THE BIRDS ...

The dinner/dance at the Arkaba was a most enjoyable function with plenty of activity on the dance floor. It's always a good opportunity to catch up with many people one has not seen for a few months.

FOUND - towards the end of that evening, a pair of earrings, screw on type with small pearl stud and long black drop. These are at the Secretary's office awaiting collection, so if you recognise them and know the owner, please advise her.

Hope to see you at the luncheon.

PAT TEDMANSON

CORRESPONDENCE

"Moongara"
Lautoka, Fiji,
14th July, 1977

Dear Jim,

Herewith my progress report at about the halfway mark of our little voyage, which to date has been a wonderful experience and well worth the effort. You have probably heard briefly from various people of our progress, so I will give you a brief resume to date, with remarks of interest.

I had promised to pick up one of my crew at Westernport Bay, so went into the Hastings Yacht Club, a small club among the mangroves of Hastings Creek. But they made us very welcome, one of their members meeting us at the jetty nearby to escort us to their clubhouse for showers etc. and full use of facilities during our stay. They were I believe impressed by our treatment of one of their Yachts when visiting the Squadron earlier this year. It is a good feeling and I wrote a little note of gratitude to their Secretary for this nice gesture.

We spent a few fascinating days in the Wilson's Promontory area where one usually sails hurriedly past, then 3 more days in the Hogan and Kent groups of islands in Eastern Bass Strait before setting off across the Tasman, where we had a good crossing until within 20 miles of N.Z. when we got caught up in a nasty one from E.N.E. at force 8 and more, and saw nothing of N.Z. for 3 days. I was convinced for awhile that the damn place didn't exist or that I'd missed it altogether.

CORRESPONDENCE ...

Weather cleared and we sailed once more around the top end and down the East Coast where we had some quite fabulous cruising through the Bay of Islands, Whangaroa Harbour, the offshore islands down past Great Barrier Island and Coromandel Peninsula, thence across the Hauraki Gulf to Auckland where we made our number with R.N.Z.Y.S. and were also treated very well indeed.

Boisterous weather by now and it can certainly blow off the N.Z. coast. We followed the colourful fleet out of Auckland Harbour on the Fiji race, then sailed back North doing all the wonderful coastal anchorages this time, spending another couple of weeks at Bay of Islands (you just never want to leave that place), sailing again on 25th May for Tonga. A furious farewell gale with filthy weather for two days to kick us out of N.Z. then free winds until now. Sailed out to Raoul Is. in the Kermadec Is. Northeast of N.Z. but big seas crashing all the way around, so anchoring or landing not possible. We sailed through the Tonga Is. from South to North, where the people are indeed too friendly, thence West, through the Eastern Fiji group to Levuka, down inside the reefs to Suva, then maritime pub crawl along the South coast of Viti Levu having the odd beer at all the elaborate bay resorts where you tie up at the lounge bar, but adjourn back aboard for meals, then back again for a dance afterwards! We leave for the remote Yasawa Is. N.W. of Fiji tomorrow and I hope I can fill in a few more details of various clubs, officialdom regarding yachts etc. etc. in a later episode. Cheers Jim, and regards to all in your office and the club generally.

Regards,

Pep

CORRESPONDENCE ...

"Moongara"
Lautoka, Fiji
4th August, 1977

Dear Murray,

I wrote to Jim a few weeks ago giving him a brief account of our voyagings, and I'll make this a sort of second instalment so you can pass it on to him to read if you wish.

We have just completed a very fascinating 5 weeks cruising the Fiji Islands from East to the not so well known Yasawa Group to the North West. Great cruising ground, but dangerous territory due to limited surveys in some areas with extensive coral reefs. Our best navigation aids in these waters are (1) One pair of eyeballs, (2) the ratlines in the rigging to con the ship from aloft and (3) the refrigerated ice-box! We've managed to keep clear of the coral so far though and the only times she has taken the ground were in the Kerikeri river, Bay of Islands N.Z. and right in front of the Royal Suva Y.C. where I was directed into the wrong channel on a falling tide by their Secretary! Apart from that we had no mishaps or gear failures, and this little vessel has fully substantiated our mutual confidence in her ability at sea. All the yacht clubs have treated us well, notwithstanding the Royal Suva's charge of \$10 per week per boat for honorary membership. I guess a lot of people use their facilities and they feel justified in asking some return. This is really the only yacht club in all Fiji, and there are no keel boats - all fast motor boats or trailer sailers. I suppose the thought of a vessel on moorings during the hurricane seasons put most of them off.

The other interesting thing is that there is a general tightening up on yachts in the Pacific. In Tonga and here in Fiji you have to enter and clear at every Customs port,

CORRESPONDENCE ...

and obtain permission to visit any island, then report back when you return. This is a damn nuisance, but has been caused by some bright characters landing drugs and booze on some of the islands and getting the locals high on both, to the consternation of the village heads who have complained to the members of parliament. Same old story everywhere, isn't it?

We cleared ship today for Noumea, and ought to be over there in about a week. Expect to spend a week or two there and make for the Aussie coast at about Gladstone by the end of the month, then the long drag down the coast, calling at as many places of interest as time will permit. I'm due back in late October.

Cheers for now Murray, please pass my best wishes on to any of my old Squadron Associates and best regards to you and Jim.

Pep

P.S. Passed the British brigantine "Eye of the Wind" off Suva under full sail - she looked quite a picture. At first we thought it might have been Chris Henderson, but I think he is a long way off Fiji yet!

Bodrum
11th August, 1977

Dear Members and Friends at Home,

Though the card still says Greek Isles, I am in fact in Turkey, Asia Minor at last, where East meets West.

CORRESPONDENCE ...

Despite the camels the beer tastes much the same. A dead end, however, unless I take the Suez, so once more I'll head for home via Panama and Pacific.

Very best to all for the coming season and if my Christmas greeting is not forthcoming this year, I am probably mid-Atlantic.

Alan Quigley
"YOUTH"

The Editor,

Last year TAINUI had a major breakdown in her refrigerator/deep freeze which was about 4 years old.

After a rebuild and refitting we were told we should have the compressor etc. checked once a year and it is our intention to do so.

The checking and possible topping up with gas etc. only takes a few minutes but travel time is about one hour each way to and from the Squadron.

We wonder whether other boat owners would consider combining with us to bring a refrigeration mechanic down for a day to check a number of boats so dividing the travel cost between a number.

Would those interested 'phone our Secretary Jim Henry who will co-ordinate times, dates, etc.

N. P. Ford
