

# Circumnavigations

## His Story, Her Story and Their Story

*New Address*, Colin Harrison's Duncanson 37 sloop, has emulated *Youth*, *Sarina* and *Thorfin* in returning to the Squadron pool where she started.<sup>1</sup> This is a brief account of what has happened to those aboard.

### HIS STORY

In 1991 Colin took his boat up the east coast and across the top end to Cove to participate in the "Across the Top" race to Darwin. He joined about sixty others in the well-established and increasingly popular Darwin-Ambon Race. This is a good way to deal with the bureaucratic complexities of the Indonesian authorities.<sup>2</sup> From Ambon *New Address* sailed the Indonesian Archipelago to Bali, and then on to Singapore. The Malacca Straits have a nasty reputation, including the risk of piracy. Colin had no trouble, and was impressed by the wild beauty of the coast fringed with islands.

A run of 1,200 miles in the north-east trades took *New Address* to Sri Lanka for supplies and sight seeing. From there Colin went to Oman at the entrance of the Persian Gulf. Next he had to make some southing to Aden at the bottom of the Red Sea. Sadly deteriorated these days from its imperial past, Aden still meets Kipling's description of being, "like a barrack stove that no one's lit for years and years."

Colin not only had to tackle the first part of the Red Sea alone, but his motor had broken down. He exploited the southerly winds of January and February 1992 for the first section. Further north strong northerlies may blow for up to nine days on end. A yacht under sail is usually obliged to shelter for a few days until she can exploit the pause before the next big blow. Colin says that it was beastly alone in the boat in some of the most dangerous steep short seas he encountered anywhere in the world. He plodded on to Egypt,

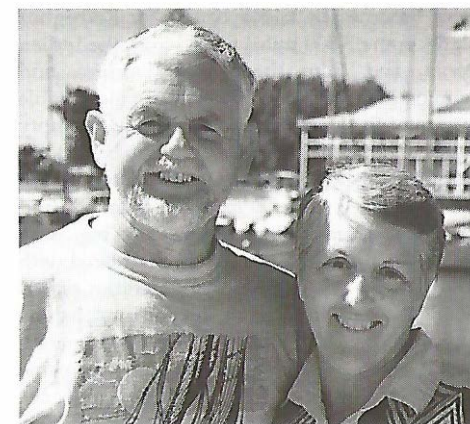
where he was able to repair the engine and embark his daughter and her friend.<sup>3</sup> After that, it was a relief to pass through the Suez Canal in a couple of days, complete with a compulsory pilot and an overnight stop at Ismailia.

The Israeli Navy's greeting to the Mediterranean was a large fruit cake, and Colin called briefly at Tel Aviv and Acre. *New Address* then joined many other yachts at Lanarca in Cyprus. This is a favourite place for those who wish to be gregarious in the eastern part of the Med. Colin pressed on to find what proved to be one of his very special favourite places: the Mediterranean coast of Turkey. It is a high steep-to coast, with tree-clad slopes and sandy beaches. The water is crystal clear, there are many pretty bays and the people are friendly. The boat was hauled out at Bodrum for the northern winter, during which Colin returned home for a southern summer. Back in the northern hemisphere, he went skiing in Austria, at the cost of a fractured pelvis. The sea was much less traumatic!

After the Greek islands and Athens, Colin passed through the Corinth Canal in a couple of hours. This cost much the same as he had to pay for as many days in the Suez Canal, without even a pilot. He made for Malta to undertake more maintenance before Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica. At the north-east corner of Corsica the flexible propeller shaft coupling broke while the anchor was being pulled into the ground according to best practice. Fortunately repair facilities were nearby. After the Balearic Islands, it was Gibraltar and the Atlantic.

Although six notable rivers and many lesser streams flow into the Mediterranean, such is the huge degree of evaporation that there are strong currents to mark how much water comes in from the Atlantic. The Straits are tricky, and can be a challenge to small craft. Like *Sarina* before her, *New Address* spent a bouncy six days covering the 700 miles to the Canary Islands. The short steep seas on the quarter sometimes came aboard without warning and drenched the helmsman.

At Las Palmas, Gran Canaria there was a notable encounter when a young lady knocked on the hull to ask for help in sending a radio message. This was Jeanne Heydon, an American



Colin and Jeanne Harrison.

undertaking a delivery from Spain to Florida. They met again in Antigua in the Caribbean.

### HER STORY

Jeanne Heydon<sup>4</sup> is a circumnavigator in her own right. Like Colin, she began as a finance manager. In 1987 she acquired a 44-foot Ted Hood design Little Harbor sloop named *Northmoor*, and did a shakedown cruise from Newport Rhode Island to the Bahamas and back. To gain more experience she crewed across the Atlantic to Spain. On 8 November 1988 she left Newport to sail the world. First it was down to the Bahamas, before passing through Panama for the classical "milk run" of Galapagos, Marquesas, Tuamotus, Tahiti, Samoa, Tonga and New Zealand. The next year Jeanne went via Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu and New Caledonia to make a landfall in Australia at Coffs Harbour. She passed down the east coast to Sydney and Melbourne to be ready for the Yamaha Melbourne-Osaka Race. She was one of the three lady skippers in this double-handed race, and was placed second in the cruising division.

Jeanne and her crew returned to Australia from Japan via Micronesia and the Solomon Islands to make a landfall at Townsville. She next went south to take part in the Abel Tasman commemorative circumnavigation of Tasmania in early 1992. Back she went to Townsville, across the Top End to Darwin and then explored the Kimberley coast.<sup>5</sup>

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## Seahorse



MARINE PAINTS

From Broome she laid a course for Rodriguez Island, some 3,500 miles west across the Indian Ocean, and from thence to Mauritius and Reunion to Cape Town. There was a memorable encounter in the middle of an otherwise empty Indian Ocean. A huge bulk carrier, bound for Europe via the Cape, came up from astern to ask if she needed any help. She thanked and reassured them, after which the big ship dropped a parcel from the stern. Retrieved with a boat hook, this contained four bottles of red wine. "It was a really civilised gesture," Jeanne remarked. Like all those who are well prepared, Jeanne timed this crossing to avoid the cyclone season. Nevertheless one appeared and ran parallel with her course for five unpleasant days.

After clearing Cape Town, Jeanne sailed a classical route to Saint Helena, notable as the

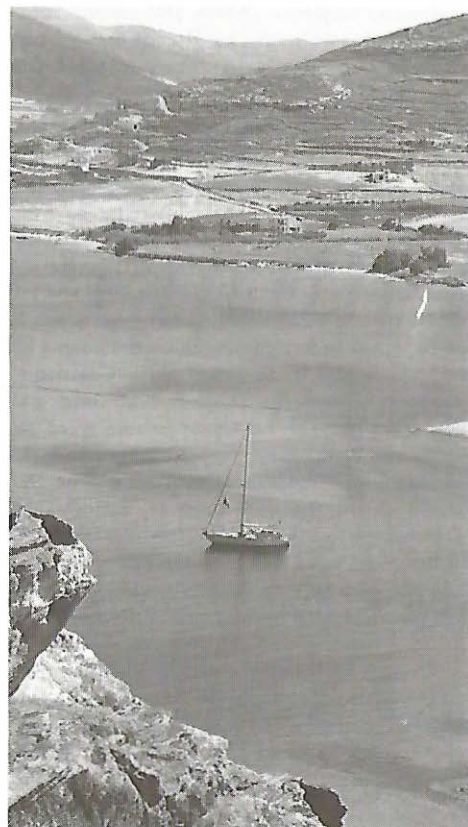
final exile of Napoleon Buonaparte.<sup>6</sup> After calling at Antigua and Bermuda, Jeanne completed her circumnavigation at Newport on 30 June 1993. That didn't get the sea out of her system, and she undertook the delivery from Spain to Florida, during which she met Colin.

#### THEIR STORY

After Jeanne completed this delivery, she and Colin have been together ever since. *New Address* proceeded from the British Virgin Islands north to Bermuda, and from thence to Rock Hall in Cheseapeake Bay to be hauled out for a couple of months. During this time they cruised on the land for ten thousand miles through the United States. After relaunching, they went via the intra-coastal waterway and Fort Lauderdale in Florida to the Bahamas. There was a pause in the Bahamas for a delivery from there to the Virgin Islands. Reunited with the faithful vessel, Colin and Jeanne went with a brief pause in the San Blas Islands to enter the Panama Canal at Colon. In contrast to Suez, yachts must go into the six locks with large ships. Paradoxically, the Pacific entrance is a few miles further from Australia than the Caribbean end.

Just to be different, *New Address* did not follow the "milk run". They spent 32 days at sea before reaching Easter Island. This included five days of flat calm, so much so that the sky and clouds were mirrored in the sea. There was abundant marine life, including whales, dolphins, sea lions, marlin, turtles and sharks. Easter Island lacks a sheltered anchorage, and it was necessary to sail off and on for three days before being able to land to see the celebrated stone figures.

If that was tedious, Pitcairn was worse. After a thousand miles they found a tiny well-watered lush island, with a population of 61 and no tenable anchorage at all. Huge swells break on to a rocky coastline. The islanders came out in their small craft to take Colin ashore while Jeanne hove-to in *New Address*. They exchanged places for her to have a turn.<sup>7</sup> From there it was more conventional cruising to sail on to the Gambier Islands and Tahiti, Samoa, Fiji and Vanuatu before making a fresh Australian landfall at Coffs Harbour.



*New Address in the Greek Isles.*

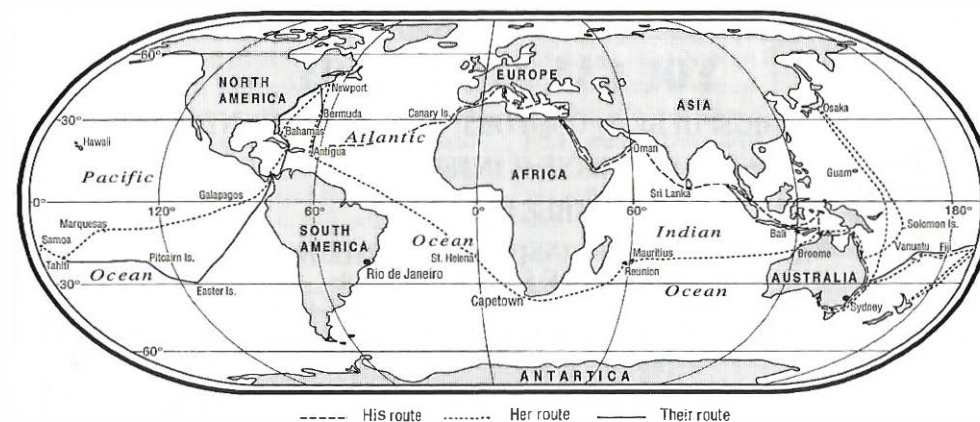
Having covered 14,000 nautical miles in less than twelve months, they arrived at the Squadron pontoon on 9 December 1995, flying the courtesy flags from the more than forty countries they have visited. The return to Adelaide was timed to coincide with the holiday occasions with family and friends. Even more importantly it was timed for their wedding date on 19 January 1996. Future plans remain unclear, but will certainly be nautical! SQ

Some of this information was obtained from an article by Neville Rhodes in *Scuttlebutt*, the publication of the Coffs Harbour Coastal Patrol, No 97, December 1995.

1. *Anaconda II* was too large for Joska Grubic to moor her in the pool. Other Squadron Members have made circumnavigations, but without returning the vessel to the pool. Howard Wright brought *Alliance* home a day earlier than *New Address*. At the time of writing, she lay at the Port Adelaide Sailing Club.
2. See Ion and Margaret Ullett's article "Bali and Beyond", *Squadron Quarterly*, September 1993: 31.

3. The Judells had a similar experience in *Sarina*. The steering quadrant failed, and they had a wretched time with an improvised short tiller, which could be operated only by standing in the after hatch. Seeking shelter and repairs in Port Sudan, they ran aground at night on Towartit Reef. They had a better time than Colin with the local bureaucracy: only one whole day. His dreary ordeal lasted for five. Judith's vivid description of their adventures was published in a series of RSAYS Newsletters. This section appeared in the November issue of 1978.

4. Harrison from 19 January 1996.
5. For the Ulletts' illustrated account of this region, see *Squadron Quarterly* for March 1993.
6. See the story of the clipper race from Semaphore to London in our last issue.
7. There is a brief description of the fate of the *Bounty* mutineers in *Squadron Quarterly* for September 1994: 33-4.



## Halyard

The correct spelling is *halyard*, and *Oxford English Dictionary* gives *haliard* and *haulyard* as older nautical forms of the word. The original was *halier*, as in the citation of 1373: "2 haliers, 2 yerderopes, 2 shettes." In 1592 the word became *hellier*, and in 1611 *haliard*. In 1627 Captain Smith Seaman's Grammar had, "The Halyards belong to all masts,

for by them we hoist the yards to their height." Smollet in 1751 wrote of "the mizen (sic) top-sail haulyards." Modern usage is *halyard*, which is the only version allowed by *The Australian Writer's and Editor's Guide*. The OED definition is nicely succinct: "A rope or tackle used for raising or lowering a sail, yard, spar, or flag."