Sailing Stories

Ruth Broward

Broward Seaside Press
Bellingham WA

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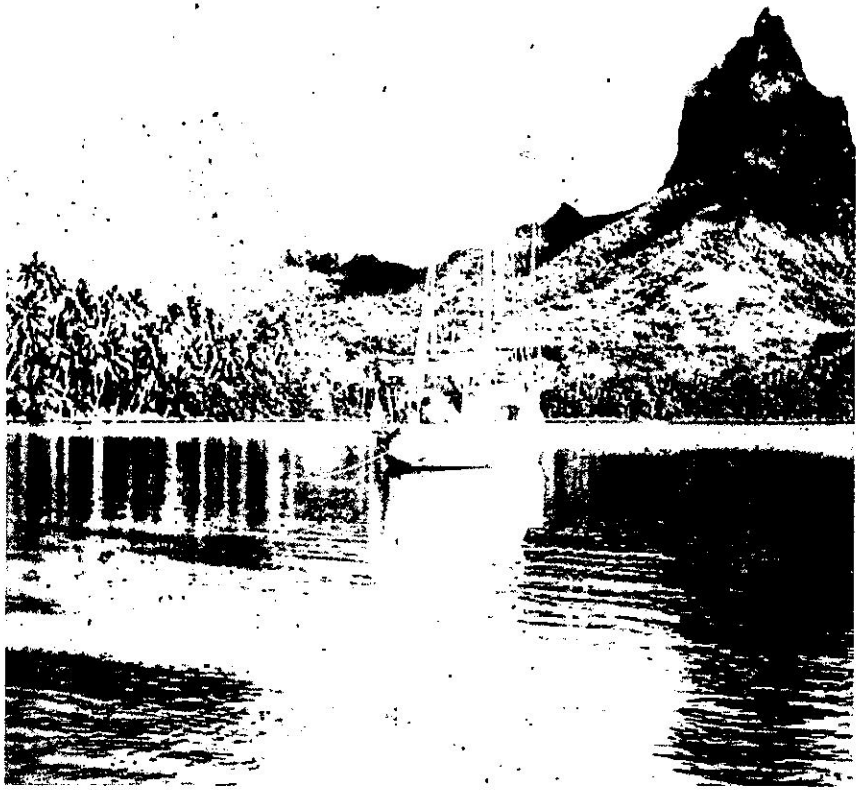

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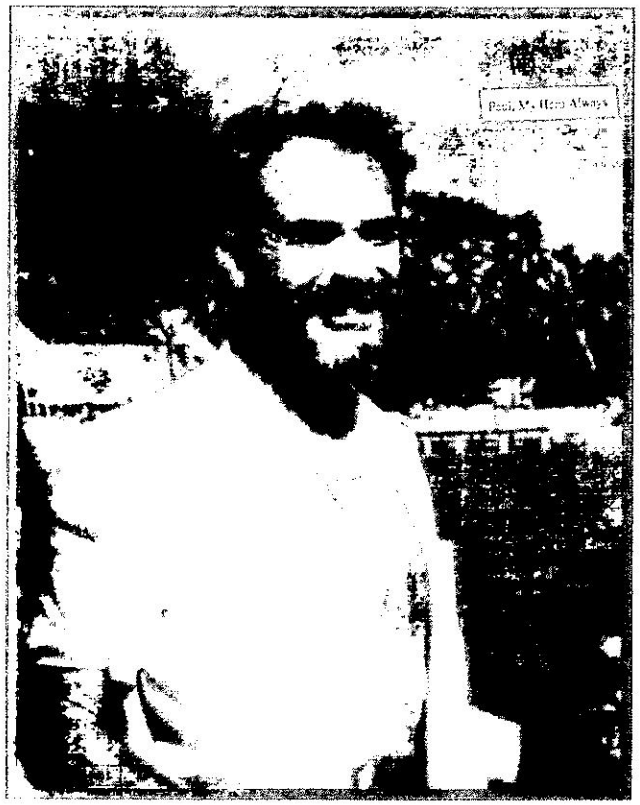

Dedication

This compilation of stories is dedicated to the memory of my husband of 57 years, Paul Broward. He is the hero of our three children, Rebecca, Rex and Russell and myself. He established a lifestyle of values, whether on or off the water, in or out of port.

Introduction

"As long as we are buying a larger boat we might as well get one that goes to weather, just in case we ever go cruising", said my husband, Paul.

"Exactly what I was thinking" I exclaimed.

We sold the 24' Thunderbird sloop that Paul had built from plans and purchased a 36' Lapworth sloop we named Zephyrus. Almost the next day we looked at each other and almost said simultaneously,

"Well, we've got the boat, let's go cruising".

Our children, Rebecca, 14, Rex, 10, and Russell, 8, were seasoned sailors. They were accustomed to sailing to Catalina Island and camping ashore. Sleeping on the Malibu beach sand on weekends not spent sailing was also a part of their life. We knew they would adapt well to long passages and primitive conditions. They said goodbye to their friends and each began choosing the one stuffed animal they would be allowed to take on board.

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Space was at a premium in our small boat. Sails, equipment, emergency water and food supplies for a family of 5 took precedent. Plus there were the daily rations for 90 days at a time that needed to find stowage space. It required restrictions on personal gear. However, we found room to sneak aboard school work and books.

Paul, engineer and aerospace scientist, taught himself Celestial Navigation and practiced sun shots in the back yard. We were all instructed how to operate a fire extinguisher and other safety measures. I had been reading books on cruising and daydreaming about it for years, so I felt prepared to provision for our particular family's tastes and the space in the tiny galley. It is just a matter of math and finding space to hide goodies for our weekly parties.

Many friends disapproved of our decision to go cruising with our children. Our families wished us well, but did not understand the what, the where or the why. The day we left Marina del Rey, California, we were happy, we were excited and felt ready to undertake a two year journey.

We never looked back or have regretted our decision. It remains the adventure of a lifetime for all of us and we each carry a treasury of memories in our hearts.

No Sleep this Night

Surf! Surf! The word is shouted by the sailor on watch. The word awakens the rest of the sleeping sailors with a heart pounding start. The word spells terror and turns all hands on the ship into instant wide- eyed action. The night is so black visibility is limited to the compass mounted in the cockpit. Even without the darkness the sheets of rain pounding, pounding down on the 36 foot sloop limit seeing the seas two feet ahead of the boat. Zephyrus is heading through a dangerous, narrow passage from Takaroa in the Tuamotu Archipelago to Rangiroa, another atoll. The currents are deceptive in this area, the winds fickle.

The passage was planned for the night of the full moon, but the moon is now completely obscured by the thick layer of clouds and the unexpected tropical deluge. There is no GPS, no satellite cell phones, no coast guard to call, no one to change the course of the impending event, but the five members of the family aboard. There is no sight of the surf line, no white froth as each wave crests. And yet even above the creaking of the sails, the roar of the swirling storm, the ominous sound of the surf is unmistakable. To hear it that distinctly it is close. Too close.

Orders are shouted. Gybing, Gybing, Heads down, Heads down. Pull the line in, Pull the line in. Faster, Faster. Course, Course, Give me the course. Orders are followed. The boat settles down into the new course, away from the surf, away from land, away from disaster.

Adrenaline levels drop, everyone is soaked and shivering. Hot chocolate is passed to everyone. The captain wishes for a shot of brandy, perhaps the first mate and even the children do also, but the rule is no alcohol while sailing, no exceptions.

The children dry off and hunker down on their bunks below. Everyone laughs and shrugs off the event. The adults sit close together in the cockpit for warmth and for comfort. There is still the rest of this dangerous night to get through. There are still four hours of watch to stand before dawn and then another passage, another atoll, another adventure awaits. But there will be no sleep this night

Bora Bora

We hoisted our sails as we left Moorea, and then wrote in our logbook our next destination, Bora Bora, James Michener declared the island Bora Bora "the most beautiful in the world". Our family of five aboard our 36' sloop were anxious to see its famed beauty for ourselves. The tide was roaring out of the lagoon and through the narrow pass at 7 knots, so we stalled outside the pass, waiting for slack tide. In the meantime, we securely attached a 25' line to the boat and dropped the line into the water. With the tide running that hard any swimming would take place with one hand on the line. Holding the line loosely the onrushing water pushed us backward to the end knot. Then came the one armed swim against the current to the beginning of the line and again the rush backward. One person on board held a shark watch for the safety of the swimmer. This delightful activity cooled our heels, passed the time and before long the line drooped, as the slack tide took over.

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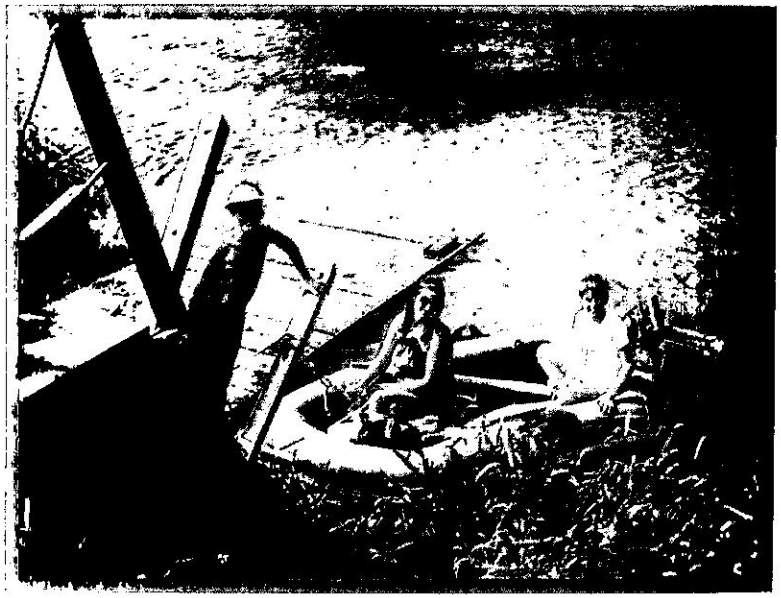
As we sailed through the entrance the neon blue-green of the water was so transparent we could clearly see the white coral heads below, along with giant undulating Manta Rays. Ahead of us rose Mt Otemanu, the tallest point on the island. .

We wondered if the first Polynesian settlers had the same sense of awe, as we did, when they made their landfall in the fourth century. We knew that Captain Cook mistook the soft Tahitian P for a B and called the paradise Bora Bora instead of Pora Pora, as the natives called their home. We anchored with fifty feet of chain snugged around a large coral head and swam ashore through the warm, calm waters of the lagoon to explore this dazzling tropical land one hundred forty miles northwest of Papeete, Tahiti.

As we hiked around the island our view of this idyllic paradise was shattered when we saw the cannons and mounted guns left over from WW11. The armaments had been placed there to protect the area from a Japanese invasion. The US had established a supply depot for the Solomon Islands and viewed it of prime importance to the war effort. It was quite a paradox to see cannons and then a few miles further see ancient maraes with their mysterious fallen walls and rocks. They brought many questions to mind, with few answers.

Most of the time on Bora Bora was spent snorkeling or diving and enjoying the exotic looking fish in the lagoon. Hiking and exploring and marveling at the hundreds of coconut trees also filled many leisurely hours. We still had many other islands to enjoy, so up went the sails again, as we set our course for yet another South Pacific landfall. We agreed with Michener that indeed Bora Bora, was the most beautiful island in the world, at least it was in our family's world.



Feeding A Cruising Family For 2 Years and

How To Make A Sailor's Breakfast

Cruising had become a way of life for our family of five, myself, my husband, Paul, Rebecca, 14, Rex, 10, Russell, 8. We left Marina del Rey, California on our 36' sloop with a larder stocked with canned chickens, sausages, dry milk, slabs of cheese, rice, 25 pounds of onions stowed in a canvas bag, and many other foods that are available in the USA.

We added 25 pounds of beef in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico that we cut into strips for jerky, then added a liberal dusting of pepper to ward off the flies and hung the pieces all over the rigging to dry. Another 25 pounds was sliced into quarter inch pieces, then layered with salt and placed into gallon sized plastic jugs. The sliced beef required soaking in fresh water to remove the salt. It was a valuable protein, cooked into spaghetti sauce, etc.

In Mexico we also added 40 pounds of limes to our stores. We discovered that months later, even when the limes were hard, they still contained juice.

We drank gallons of limeade, as we left Mexico behind and sailed to our next destination, the remote Marquesas Islands, a sail of 21 days. There would be no scurvy on our boat.

We made landfall at dusk on the 21st day, we anchored and waited sleepless and impatiently for the sun to rise in the morning to begin our explorations. After spending several months cruising the Marquesan Islands, Nuka Hiva, Hiva Oa, Ua Pou, and others, exploring burial caves, swimming in waterfalls, hiking miles in the lush landscape, it was time to replenish our stores. Paul shot goat, the boys dressed it down, Rebecca and I processed it the same as the beef in Mexico. Quarter inch slices, layered in salt, stacked in gallon jars. The goat we used mostly in curries, and other seasoned dishes to disguise the strong flavor. Fresh, it was like lamb, but once processed for keeping, the taste changed, and not exactly for the better.

While anchored off the Marquesan Islands we had many opportunities to sample the island culinary delights. A Marquesan woman showed me how to French fry breadfruit and also how to cook whole breadfruit in a campfire, then open it and pour coconut crème over it. We feasted on fish, lobster, pig, fresh goat, coconuts, bananas, and fruits that we had never seen before.

It was in this island paradise that I developed the recipe that became the standard for a great sailor's breakfast. Like all great recipes and all great cooks will tell you, there was a procedure that needed to be followed:

First the red canvas bag was retrieved from the hanging locker. Next Paul wrapped and placed our machete safely in the bag. All five of us gently stepped into our Avon dinghy and rowed ashore. Now it was time for the great hunt.

After hiking several miles we found what we were looking for – a coconut tree bent a bit low by some errant wind years ago. Our boys were still learning the skill of climbing a tall coconut tree and the slight bend made the job a little easier and safer, although still extremely high to a Mother's eye. Up to the top one of the boys climbed, machete in hand. Down came the coconuts as he chopped away. To lessen the bulk, the husks were taken off by jamming them into a pointed stick in the ground. Now those precious brown balls were stashed into the red canvas bag.

There was one more task to complete. Another mile or so we found the perfect banana tree. Up went another son with the machete, down came a four foot stalk of bananas. The boys took turn carrying it on their shoulders, resulting in two dark brown stains from the stems on their white tee shirts. A small price to pay.

The walk back to the dinghy seemed shorter with the anticipation of the next step of preparation. Back aboard the boat the banana stalks were hung in the water for awhile to discourage spiders or other nasties from joining our breakfast party. The next chore was to find and analyze a clean white sock. One after another was discarded. With lowered standards a sock was selected. Paul attached the coconut grater that he had hand hewn out of a spare piece of stainless steel to a metal shaft in the cockpit.

In the meantime, the coconuts had been drained and opened. Everyone now took turns holding a half of a coconut against the grater and working away. When a nice pile of coconut had accumulated, it was put into the sock and squeezed hard over a bowl. Despite the dubious sock, the coconut crème was a lovely white.

Now the recipe could be assembled. First a layer of vanilla pudding (made earlier), then a layer of bananas, next came some leftover rice, more vanilla pudding and then that glorious coconut crème poured over all. No one cared that it was now noon, we still called it our special cruising breakfast and no breakfast since, has ever equaled it for our family.

Laughter – The Common Language

Our family of five had sailed our 36 ft. sloop, Zephyrus from Marina del Rey, California to Cabo San Lucas, to Puerto Vallarta, then 2100 miles across the sea to the Marquesan Islands, then through the 78 atolls of the Tuamotian archipelago and were now about to make the port of Papeete, Tahiti. It was a dark night when we spotted our destination, the shore lights were making it difficult to determine just where to land, so we turned back out to sea and spent the night tacking off shore, waiting for the dawn to ensure a safe landing. At first light we sailed in and tied stern-to a concrete bollard a few feet from the land.

We had met a memorable collection of people on our travels to the various islands and atolls. We had met Marquesan families that feasted us with goat that had been running on the mountain hours before and pigs that were now buried in coals in the sand awaiting unearthing. One Marquesan woman and I cried together, despite our language difficulties, as she explained to me with many gestures, few words, but a Mother's anguish on her face, how much she missed her children that must go to school on a different island

We had met Paul Gauguin's grandson and the wife of the Polynesian governor on a tiny atoll in the Tuomotos. We had been invited to the impressive outdoor state dinner in their honor. Each of us sat with a young girl behind us gently waving a palm frond to keep off any insects. There had been numerous high points on our journey. We didn't yet know they would all be surpassed.

No sooner were we tied up but a ragtag group of various aged children gathered on the shore and stared at us. They soon were swarming over the boat and making friends with our boys, Rex 10 and Russ 8, while our daughter, Rebecca 14, Paul and I looked on in amazement. All of them then tumbled in and out of our dinghy, jumping in and out of the warm water. Laughter was the common language

We called them "the street gang". They turned up every day, waiting for the boys to join them. Off they would go, up one street and down another. The boys were invited to the 1 year naming parties of younger sisters and brothers and met parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc. We watched our white faced, freckled faced boys, now the minority, make friends with these joyful brown bodied Tahitian children that had so willingly accepted them into their group.

There were times when we sailed off to visit other islands, Bora Bora, Moorea, Huahini, etc., but we always returned to our anchorage at Papeete and always, somehow the group knew and would soon appear and spirit our boys away to get reacquainted. for at least 3 months, thoughts of the "street gang" were far from the adult's minds.

The day we were to leave a pall settled over the boat, as we reluctantly began the process of pulling up anchor and untying the line from the bollard. There was no one to say goodbye to on the shore.

Suddenly the "gang" appeared, running down the road and scrambling over the rocks to get to our boat. They had 5 shell leis in their hands. They solemnly presented one to each of us, placing them around our necks. There was no laughter today. We slowly sailed out of the harbor, as we looked back, each child waved goodbye to us until we could no longer see them. Or was it because of the tears in our eyes.

Where's The Fear?

Crack! was the jarring sound as our 36' sloop Zephyrus slapped hard into the bottom of a 40' wave, as we crossed the Alinuihaha channel on our way to Lahaina, Hawaii from Tahiti.

The boat slipped roller coaster style down into each trough and then began the agonizing uphill battle. Back on top each wave of green water slapped all five of us against the seats, engulfing us in water over our heads. As we took a deep breath and shook the water off, it cleared out quickly through the scuppers.

When down in the trough the mountain of water facing us was higher than our mast. Each wave needed to be quartered into to prevent getting broadside to the force. We all had plenty of experience with thousands of miles behind us, from Mexico to the Marquesas, the Tuomotos, the Society Islands, etc. but this was the strongest wind, the largest seas, and the longest 3 days of tough weather we had encountered. In this type of sea, retrieval of an overboard person would be impossible.

We were screaming along on bare poles, except for a scrap of sail to steady us. We were dragging sea drogues to slow us down, with little effect.

Paul, captain of the ship bore most of the burden, as he had the helm off and on for hours. Our 16 year old daughter, Rebecca and I could only take the helm for shifts of twenty minutes, instead of our usual four hours each, as it was exhausting. The boys, Rex 11, and Russ 9, gave morale support. In two years of cruising, as first mate and cook it was the first time I did not prepare an evening meal. Russell and I crawled below and dug out various cans, an opener, and forks to pass up to the cockpit. While below, during one of the larger bangs in a trough, Russ and I actually were turned upside down, as we sat on a bunk. We laughed and righted ourselves.

For three days and nights we plowed onward to our destination. We finally made the roadstead of Lahaina and dropped an anchor. I had the night watch. I was so tired that when the moon came up I hallucinated and was sure it was a ship approaching. Paul confirmed that it was just the moon and sat with me for a while, as we gazed thankfully at the calm seas and the silhouettes of the palm trees on shore.

We have been asked if we were frightened during that experience. The truth is that we were too busy surviving to be scared. Also, we knew we had the experience and knowledge to get through it and that our vessel was sound. In that situation, that could change for the worst at any moment, the calm attitude of the adults was essential.

We had done everything possible to stay safe; there was no point in scaring the 3 children. They were experienced enough to know the situation was difficult. Later, in rethinking those nights, my heart beats fast and I say a prayer of thankfulness that we all lived to tell the story.

Willard Stows Away

"I smell a rat," I said, lying on the bunk of our small boat, luxuriating in the lack of movement of our L-36 sloop, Zephyrus. We were inside the lagoon of Takaroa, a Tuamotian atoll in the South Pacific. The boat was snuggled up against a concrete wall, tied securely forward and aft. Civilization seemed a long way off to our family. It was the sixth month of a two-year cruise; we had adapted to the lack of amenities. The kerosene light flickered on our 14-year-old daughter's face as she sat reading up in the cockpit, a few yards from where I lay. Rebecca chuckled at the idea of my smelling a rat on board.

"It must be the wharf rats eating the copra on the quay that I smell." I said, propping my feet on a mildewing sail bag.

The aroma of mold, mildew, musty National Geographics, and the yellow onions swinging in the net beneath the table was almost overpowered by the heavy, sweet smell of drying coconut meat waiting shipment on tomorrow's copra boat to Tahiti.

My nose tingled as I tried to sort out the bombardment of odors. There it was. Unmistakable. The musky aroma of a mature rat.

"I don't smell it," Rebecca said reassuringly, glancing down into the dim cabin.

"Come up to the cockpit, I need you, I need you now, right now," she suddenly blurted.

"I'm coming," I said immediately, accustomed to obeying the orders of the person on watch. Pushing aside the lee cloth and scrunching myself out of the quarter berth, I vaulted up the companionway stairs to her side.

"What is wrong?" I asked.

Throwing her arms around me, she whispered in my ear, *"Don't scream, just look back down at your bunk."*

I screamed.

Less than a foot away from the head of my bunk, on a counter, sat an impudent large rat voraciously munching what remained of a tin of New Zealand cheese.

He had no need to be gorging himself so hurriedly for he was to be our unwelcome guest for the next three days and would have an opportunity to sample many of the ship's provisions. He was a clever stowaway who eluded all efforts to rid ourselves of him.

While neither Rebecca nor I could look at a piece of cheese, Paul, my husband, and our two boys, Rex, 10, and Russell, 8, accepted the presence of the rat philosophically and seemed content to share both rations and quarters with the rodent.

The males were impatient to set sail for our next port, with or without our little bundle of fur. After a futile search for a rattrap failed, I reluctantly agreed to cast off our lines and set a course for the island of Manihi.

On the first day of our sail, Willard, as we named him, explored the boat freely. Satiated with cheese and cabin biscuits, he settled down for a nap in the hanging locker but soon found it amusing to detach each nylon loop from a large piece of shag carpeting.

When he reached the foam backing, it evidently wasn't to his liking for he moved his base of operations to the lazarette, as far as he could get.

In the lazarette, to his delight, he discovered the perfect therapy for the seasickness which was now causing him to lose his appetite for more substantial fare.

He discovered the Styrofoam.

Twelve pristine white Styrofoam egg cartons. Stowed in a dark corner near the stern of the boat, would occupy his time nicely for the sail to his new home. They made such a satisfying crunch with each tiny bite.

That crunching sound as he bit and clawed his way through the egg cartons drowned out all other sounds. The wind in the rigging, the whistling teapot on the two burner kerosene stove, the shouted order to watch the course, all were negated by the crescendo of Willard's nocturnal orchestrating of his Styrofoam symphony.

Holding a course takes concentration under any sailing conditions. Alone, in the cockpit, on watch on a dark night, Pleiades and Orion guiding my hand on the tiller, it's usually easy to focus my attention on the set of the sail. The sounds and the smell of rat made it impossible.

When we gybed, the unexpected movement of the boat wrenched the sleeping skipper from his damp forward bunk.

"Couldn't you be more subtle? That's a hell of a way to tell a guy it's his watch," Paul stated.

Mutiny in my eyes, I left him to get his own earful and slunk down to the cabin. I took a new watch position now, sitting on the floorboards where I could observe all three sleeping children and still hear Willard. The game now was to listen for a cessation in the crunching sound. That could mean he was bored or hungry. The bunks of the children were on the path to the cupboard.

I listened lovingly to the sounds of Willy at play; when he paused for a moment, my heart pounded. Sweat ran down my arms; my hands clenched, and, terrorized, I prepared to crush that rat singlehanded should even its tail so much as touch my sleeping babies. Motherhood at its mightiest!

The storekeeper back in Takaroa must have been a mother for when efforts to obtain a rattrap had failed, she brought out her personal supply of poison pellets and shared them with me. She knew desperation when she saw it.

Each night the first watch set out a dish containing 15 poison pellets. Each morning the last watch counted them, 15 pellets. Willard knew his arithmetic. He also knew by now every inaccessible cranny on the boat.

Should he take the coward's way out and take the pill, we knew where he would plan his demise. After analyzing Will's character, there was no doubt he would choose the most difficult-to-reach corner. Nor was there any doubt about the aroma he would leave behind as he scurried toward that big cheese in the sky.

I decided I could sooner sleep through a smell, as exhausted as I was, than through the sounds of the rat, so I continued to hope that Willard would set his high principles aside for one moment, throw caution overboard and nibble just one little pellet. I wanted that rat dead.

Second only to our bilge rat was where I ranked Paul, for his nonchalance. When Paul slept peacefully through my nightly vigils, I seethed and conjured up visions of Willard walking across HIS chest. His tolerance for my enemy was unforgiveable and with every shrug of his arrogant male shoulder, 23 years of closeness and communication were being shredded along with 2 pieces of Styrofoam. Where, I wondered, was his killer instinct?

My maternal instinct now had my nerves raw; I was red-eyed and irritable from my sleepless-nights. With great relief I sighted the tiny coral atoll of Manihi off the starboard bow.

Low-lying, glaring white, lacking in greenery except for the coconut palm. Manihi is not the lush tropical paradise usually thought of as the South Pacific.

We tied up at the concrete wall and were immediately greeted by a welcome sight.

A female cat named Ava stood on the dock, looking at us expectantly, waiting to be invited aboard. She was large and raw-boned, lacking in all feline charms, and she was hungry. Ava meowed loudly as we all made way for her rather clumsy jump onto the deck of the boat. We threw open the lazarette hatch and tossed the worldly Ava into the untidy bed of Styrofoam chips.

Falling over one another in our haste to abandon our ship, we left Ava and Willard to their fate. We strolled about the small village trying to look unconcerned.

Curiosity and compassion for Ava soon brought us back to our little sloop. We found her in the cabin. Lying on her back, Ava, looking smug and satiated, lazily batted at the onions in the net beneath the table. The skins made a crackling noise between her paws.

There was no other sound on board that night. I forgave Paul for his sound sleeping, patted Ava, and slept soundly myself.

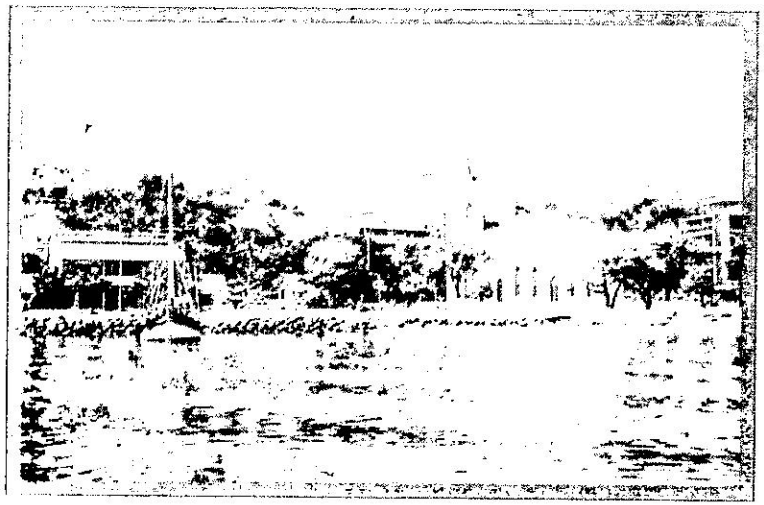
The Tahitian Easter Bunny

Our 36' sloop, Zephyrus was resting at anchor, "stern to" with a line to a bollard on the shore and a bow anchor nestled between coral heads at Papeete, Tahiti,

The melodic sounds of a Tahitian chorus practicing hymns for the Easter services the next morning had my husband Paul, and our three children Rebecca, Rex and Russell sitting in our cockpit so as not to miss any notes as they wended their way across the water.

We had been cruising the South Pacific for more than a year. We'd celebrated Christmas in Puerto Vallarta and birthdays in Bora Bora. Now Easter in Papeete was tomorrow.

The children understood the holiness of the holiday, but being children, the big question in their minds was, of course, would the Easter bunny find our small boat in this big ocean?



They no longer actually believed in the magical bunny, but still... they had always awakened to an American style basket, complete with jelly beans and the ubiquitous huge stuffed fluffy animal.

Paul and I had walked from one end of town to the other that morning, seeking and sometimes begging to purchase eggs to dye. Eggs were in short supply. We finally had six. Carefully and gently we rowed the precious cargo out to our boat.

Six eggs, two apiece for the children and the few candies we had managed to buy seemed meager indeed for an Easter morning. I had three small baskets, but where was the bright grass, the cellophane, the ribbons? A plan was needed.

We waited until the children were asleep. By now they had low expectations for Easter morning. When the town of Papeete was still and dark, we silently eased over the side of the boat into our dinghy. Paul gently slipped the oars and with barely a sound rowed us to shore. We began our midnight quest.

Earlier that day we had observed wild, deserted land at the edge of town with masses of flowers. That is where we headed. The addictive scent of frangipani, plumeria and other exotic flowers was overwhelming, leading us on to our destination.

We stuffed our red canvas bag and filled our arms. Back on board we filled the three baskets, the cockpit, the lifelines, the beds, the counters. Everywhere you looked, there were flowers. Our boat was a bower of blossoms. The heady aroma of the tropical flowers filled the salt air and masked the mustiness of stowed sails.

Get the Bugs Out of Cruising

Or learning to live with uninvited guests in the South Pacific

"Eat the weevils, they're protein," my friend advised me as she handed me a plate of rice. My husband, our three children and I had just rowed over to her boat for dinner, leaving our sloop securely anchored 50 yards away.

This was our first French Polynesian anchorage. We were at Nuku Hiva, the Marquesas, on what was to be a two-year cruise, and I was eager to learn any tips my veteran cruising friend could offer.

I passed on the weevils and instead took the advice of a Chinese cook in Taiohae Bay. I spent 20 minutes a day rinsing our rice seven times. Then, taking one handful at a time, I handpicked the remaining weevils out of the rice. All rice south of Hawaii, I learned, has weevils, but you can choose which way you get your own protein.

I prefer the Marquesan goat, which my husband shot, our boys butchered, and our daughter and I sliced and layered in rock salt and stored in one-gallon plastic containers.

Finding protein sources other than weevils was easier than getting the rest of the bugs out of cruising. Roaches are a powerful adversary in equatorial waters. With determination and a small amount of effort, you can prevent even the most aggressive of roaches from commandeering your boat.

Roach powder gets damp and sticky in the tropics and is an unpleasant daily reminder of the battle of the bugs. I prefer the thick, liquid-type bug killer which comes with a brush and resembles a bottle of oven cleaner. I paint all corners and crevices where food is stowed. It dries invisibly, but works like dynamite.

Provisions that come aboard in cardboard boxes should be unloaded in the cockpit. Throw the boxes back to shore or sink them. Roaches love laying eggs in the cardboard crevices. If you are a zealot, you will remove the labels on all tinned goods, as roaches find their glue backing appetizing and also use them as a maternity ward. That was too much work for me so I took my chances with the cans and just stowed them neatly away in the poison-painted cupboards.

Bugs, roaches, and especially spiders, come aboard nestled between closely-bunched bananas. Before bringing stalks of bananas aboard your boat, dip the entire bunch into the sea and vigorously plunge it in and out of the water several times. Then, rather than bringing bananas down into the cabin, secure them high in the rigging if possible.

Check the stalk occasionally and discard any over-ripe bananas to discourage fruit flies.

Frequently check storage areas for evidence of roaches. If you see one roach, pursue it until it is a dead roach. Remember, it may be a mother and a single female roach is capable of laying 30 eggs every 30 days. In six months of cruising your first mated pair could produce something like 2,430,100,000,000 descendants.

If you are already into your fifth generation, and if, when cutting bread, your knife hits the board and you fear the crunch you hear is not the crust, then you need more drastic action.

Bring a bug bomb with you from the U.S. for this emergency. There are none available in French Polynesia nor in many remote cruising areas. The preparation required for this method is extensive. First, you must camp ashore or find a compatible native family with which to spend at least 24 hours.

Once anchored in a calm cove, remove or open all lockers, cupboard doors, bunk boards and floorboards—as many areas as possible.

Close all portholes and hatches to seal the fumes in the cabin.

The idea is to kill the roaches, not your wife, husband or crew, so be positive you do not contaminate your food. Cover and seal all foodstuff. Set off the bomb and evacuate your boat.

If your sleep is still restless, "no-nos" or "no-see-ums" may be the culprits. They are tiny flying insects, barely discernible to the eye, but ferocious in manner. They attach quietly with no buzzing whining, or dive-bombing at your ears. You don't hear them coming or see them going. You realize you've been attacked when, about 12 hours later, you awaken in a scratching frenzy, your fingernails tearing at your body trying to stop the maddening itching.

Try any remedy you like. Psychologically it helps to rummage through the first aid kit, opening bottles and pouring on lotions. It keeps your mind off the itching.

A tiny dab of Tiger Balm, an ointment available everywhere in the South Pacific, will help more than anything you brought with you, short of an anti-itching medication you take orally. Tiger Balm also prevents gnats or flies from landing on open sores.

The most important thing to do is wash your hands, cut your fingernails short, clean them and keep them that way. The scratched bites infect very easily, and when the itching is gone, you can be left with an infection.

Also, there are gnats in the tropics that lay their eggs in open sores, further delaying the healing process and adding to the chain of discomfort.

To avoid the agony from the "no-no" bites, you must pit your wits against their persistence. You must keep one step ahead of this enemy which is prevalent and especially virulent in the Marquesas.

Before going ashore, dress in a light-weight, long-sleeved shirt, long pants, shoes and socks. The long sleeves also protect from the brush while hiking.

Heat and humidity are high when so dressed, so when you encounter a cool waterfall with a large pool beneath it, you'll want to jump in. Walk as close to the edge as possible, remove your clothes as though your life depends on how fast you get them off, and don't tarry. The water may be ice cold, but it beats scratching all night, so submerge yourself quickly. Get out of the water at the same place and get your clothes back on quickly. If you follow my advice, you'll return to your boat with only 15 or 20 bites.

As you lie in your bunk that night, try to remember that even paradise has its price, and it is worth it.

The mosquitoes also will give you their two cents. A good honest Marquesan mosquito encountered in a banyan forest can give you a welt 2 inches across. It can bite through a medium-weight man's work shirt. Insect repellent discourages but does not eliminate them. They are more adventurous than "no-nos" and will follow you aboard your boat. They consider themselves your guests unless you set them straight.

Mosquito coils flash the message as soon as you light them. You will find the garish boxes of pyrethrum in every store in French Polynesia. In the languid South Pacific, watching the smoldering red light burn in the darkness is often an evening's live entrainment. Though they stink, accept it; it's better than thigh-slapping.

A philosophical attitude is necessary toward equatorial flies, for there is little you can do about them except to hang sticky flypaper, which can be purchased in Papeete. Counting the dead flies is good therapy. If live flies are buzzing about your beef jerky drying on your lifelines or in your rigging, coat the meat with pepper. They will look elsewhere for a meal. You can shake some of the pepper off when the jerky is dry. It will be a little hot but you'll feel better about eating it two months later.

An invitation to a roast pig or barbecued goat dinner may be graciously extended to you by a Marquesan family. If you aren't psychologically equipped to shrug your shoulders at the swarming flies and settle back and enjoy their meat and hospitality, then stay home in your own backyard with a can of *Raid.*

If thoughts of roaches, rats, flies, gnats and "no-nos" have you squirming in your seat and are giving you second thoughts about cruising in tropical waters, remember this: if you go to the South Pacific with a few simple weapons and the knowledge to go with them, you can minimize the inconvenience and be free to enjoy the scenery, the people and a way of life that may change yours forever.

There was a serpent in the garden of Eden, but think what we all would have missed if Adam and Eve had decided to call it off and stay home.

Celebration on Manihi

The sun rises abruptly near the equator. The short virile rays do not stop caressing your skin; they demand your entire body. First there is a pressure on the eyelids, a hot, white light that even the reflex of the tightening eye muscles fails to squeeze out. Then the quivery itching sensation, beginning at the back of the knee, reaches the ankle, leaving a shining globule of sweat at the end of a wet track down the leg. Soon the pores begin their daily task. The facial pores are a bit lazy and only produce a clammy, sticky sensation. The assault of the tropical sun is brutal and brilliantly affective. Day has come.

"This is the day, the day of the fete; the governor's wife is coming!" shouts the small Tuamotian boy, his eyes reaching the brilliant blue sky.

A small six-passenger plane should soon be setting down on the coral landing strip of this sun drenched atoll in French Polynesia.

Manihi is one of 78 islands that form the Tuamotian archipelago. They are strewn roughly in an arc halfway between the Society Islands and the Marquesas Islands.

Unlike the Marquesas, which are largely black volcanic rock, stately and imposing with lush valleys abundant in breadfruit, papayas, taro and other tropical staples, the Tuamotos are bright, scrappy little pieces of coral, no higher than a palm tree and often not a whole lot wider.

Lacking the spectacular waterfalls and clear streams of Tahiti, the natives of Manihi catch rainwater in galvanized gutters that dump it into ugly little storage cisterns.

Along the gutters, near the quay, where the copra warehouses stand, rats chase one another back and forth when the sun is down.

Cutting copra provides a way to earn a few francs for purchasing supplements to the limited diet of fish and coconut.

Tinned fruit and vegetables from America, cheese from New Zealand and bully beef from Australia line the shelves in the living room of the small stucco house which also serves as grocery store on Manihi's main street.

"Do you have any vegetables today!" inquires an American whose small yacht is tied up at the dock.

"None today. The chief's wife, Madame Elston, needs them all for the fete today. I am closing the store now to go with the other women and help prepare the food."

Mrs. Elston's kitchen is crowded with matronly figures stirring and tasting and bustling about, wiping their perspiring faces on their colorful pareus. Lips stretch into wide, often toothless, approving smiles.

Everyone is busy.

In preparation for today, large ungainly coconut crabs have been caught and staked separately; if they can reach one another, they can eat one another. Their aggressive nature is subdued now for they are bubbling in a huge pot on the back of Mrs. Elston's stove. All that remains is a white, tender, sweet meat barely tinged with a tickle taste of coconut.

Coconut meat or cream is used in many of the dishes being prepared for the state dinner. *"Manihi coconut bread is unique and we are famous for it all over the islands,"* the mayor's mother says with a steamy, radiant face.

"We also grate the coconut meat, squeeze out the liquid and pour it over our fresh marinated fish. The French call it Poisson Cru (raw fish)," Mrs. Elston adds, stirring the curry sauce for another fish recipe.

The aroma of the fresh fish, the creamy curry sauce, the crabs cooking and the sweet coconut bread baking unite in the tropical heat, forming airborne ambrosia drifting out the open door.

It floats along the main street of Manihi, past the tidy brown and white Mormon church, past the sun faded green and pink stucco houses, past the only papaya tree on the atoll (stunted and pale, but proudly bearing a small cluster of fruit), past the tiny tomato plant in its tiny precious square of almost real soil, painstakingly gathered from every corner of the coral island until finally the festive smells reach the Ho tree.

The Ho tree is the WFW, the Lions Club, City Hall, the corner drugstore, the neighborhood bar. It is the back-yard fence and the analyst's couch. It is where, together, Manihi laugh, cry, sing, play games and greet visiting dignitaries.

Each visitor's crown of flowers, made of masses of the fragrant velvet-like frangipangi, lies waiting on a bench. Monoi tiare, coconut oil scented with the petals of the delicate white tiare flower, shines on the flushed faces of several teen-aged girls weaving mats for the long dinner. Their nimble brown fingers make the strands of palm leaves fly in and out. As each is completed, they hurl it onto a stack and pick up another palm frond without breaking rhythm.

The town band members have assembled near the base of the huge tree and are tuning their instruments while laughing and making small jokes to pass the last few minutes.

The music is interrupted by the sound of the plane engines. The plane is heading in, over the lagoon, flying low, lining up with the narrow landing strip.

Hearing the plane, Mr. Elston, chief of the village and the highest Mormon official, reaches for his stout cane. Heaving his heavy frame out of his chair, he leans most of his weight on his cane. The upper portion of his torso, dynamic and impatient, leans ahead of his slower legs. The arthritis in his right foot is throbbing today. His suit is heavy, and at the open neck of his white shirt the upper buttons of his Mormon "garment" show. His white handkerchief won't absorb any more, but he wipes his face with the damp cloth anyway and takes his place at the beginning of the welcoming line.

Mr. and Mrs. Elston, Hurly the mayor, Hurly's mother and the seven Americans from the two boats tied at the quay all stand together, behind them the rest of the townspeople. Everyone is sweating and swatting flies.

There is no sweat on the regal brow of Madame Daniel Videau, wife of the governor of French Polynesia, as she strides towards the group from the plane. She is hatless. Her titian-hued hair, pulled up and away from her face, is wound around into a glistening copper coil on the back of her head. The regal effect is softened by the escape of several mischievous tendrils which, though slightly damp in the humidity, still bob about as she greets everyone and accepts her crown of flowers.

Following her is Mr. Emil Gauguin, Paul Gauguin's grandson, and his wife, the two airplane pilots and a personal aide who, with chicken-like motions, propels the group toward the laden table and places Madame Videau at the head of it.

"We've already eaten," the aide states, glancing at his watch, then staring at the table.

"I wouldn't miss this lovely feast, so much preparation, so much food, so many flowers. C'est bon," she replies, filling her plate.

"People here can put together a meal from the most limited ingredients; they are the most hospitable people in the world," comments the American yachtie. *"You come into their midst, a perfect stranger, not knowing their customs, their culture, and you are literally brought to your knees by their dignity. Yet they are not aloof, they are warm and giving, extending themselves for you today when they know you'll be gone tomorrow,"* he added.

"You are all lucky to meet people the way you do," Emil Gauguin said, shaking the white hair on his head at the cruising sailors. *"I've always wanted to sail my own boat about the world. To be free, to get up and go where you want, when you want.*

"I think you have to be young to do that. I've traveled all my life exhibiting my grandfather's paintings but I don't think it's the same. I envy you people, I really do."

"We really must be on our way." The aide stood abruptly.

"First I must have some of this Manihi bread to bring home to my husband and children, may I?" pleads Madame Videau.

Holding the package of wrapped bread, the governor's wife waves goodbye to everyone. Her orange and yellow sheer cotton dress flowing behind her, her sandaled feet making tiny clouds of coral dust, she hurries back to the waiting plane. Her next stop is Faa Airport, Papeete. It will be dusk before she is home.

The evening sea breeze is fluttering the mats on the empty long table, and the heat waves from the sun on the street have disappeared. The fragrant tropical night will soon envelope your cooling body. The gentle moon will cast shadows on your brow, the Southern Cross will shine down with benevolence and for the next twelve hours the sun will be impotent.

Cabo San Lucas

The sail from Marina del Rey, California had been blessedly uneventful, unless you count the hot portable oven that splattered wet bread dough everywhere, as it sailed about the cabin. It had been perched on top of our two burner gimbaled kerosene stove. Apparently the gimbal was not enough to keep the top heavy oven within the confines of the stovetop. Or perhaps you might call the demise of the oven an unusual occurrence, as it was unceremoniously thrown, rather violently, overboard, accompanied by what was referred to as, "sailor slang" on our 36' Lapworth sloop. Zephyrus.

We were on course for Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, captain and husband Paul, our three children, Rebecca, Rex and Russell. As we sailed past Cabo San Lucas we were all struck by the unusual light falling on the end of land as it reached out into the blue of the great Pacific Ocean. The amazing shade of pure gold seemed to vibrate as the fading sun struck the boulders. Their edges were softened by eons of tiny grains of sand and the relentless washing of the surf, that reached for the soft gold beaches. It was an experience that left everyone speechless.

Without words we adjusted the sails and headed in toward a place that called to us so strongly that we changed our destination instantly. We made landfall, anchored and immediately swam to that golden shore, climbed the nearest boulder and bathed in the illumination of the last of the rays of that transforming sun.

The next day the boys made friends with local fishermen that taught them to fish from shore with line on a soda can. Throwing it out, winding it back up filled many sun filled hours. Those same fishermen tossed the boys a fish when they returned in the afternoon from their off shore fishing jaunt. Amid lots of thank you the boys proudly brought home dinner to our boat. Into the pan sizzling on our two burner kerosene stove it went and was soon enjoyed by the five hungry sailors.

The festive mood was not to last. Another boat had sailed in and anchored nearby. A Father and one son were on an around the world voyage. He told us an incredibly tragic and disturbing story.

He had started out with two sons close in age to our boys. One of the boys was on night watch while the other son and the Dad slept below. When the Dad awakened and peered into the cockpit it was empty. His son had gone overboard during his watch. We could not even imagine the heartache, the deep grief and probably some guilt mixed in that he must have felt.

During our two year cruise we never let the boys take a night watch alone. An adult was always present in the cockpit at night except for Rebecca. At fourteen, she was an experienced sailor and also knew when to call for help. Everyone on watch, including the Captain, wore a rope vest with a short rope attached to the life lines. We practiced man over board drills and always had a "pointer" on Paul when rarely he went forward at night to change a sail.

Our mood was somber and coincidentally, the sky suddenly turned ominous, a yellowish grey that foretold the tail end of a hurricane. The dregs of it, the wind and rain would soon swoop over those golden shores. Waves suddenly began cresting higher and higher. I was the only one on the boat; the anchor was dragging with the surge of the seas.

Thankfully, Paul and the children immediately took note of the change in the weather and were soon on board. Rebecca and I pulled up anchor while Paul and the boys headed to the sails and winches. The few sailboats in the anchorage all headed out to sea and safety. That night an electrical storm hit amid drenching rain. The lightening was [illegible] all around our boat. It was so bright that the effect was to show the bones in our hands, as though we were [illegible] x-rayed. We sailed on, as there obviously is no other alternative.

A Gift From Home

1 ½ years, 540 days had passed since the family of five had seen a familiar face. There were friendly faces, French, Mexican, Marquesan, Tuamotian, Tahitian and others from around the world, but they weren't familiar faces. They weren't exactly homesick; their home was now their sailboat, as they sailed from country to country, island to island. And yet. When becalmed on the equator for several days, drifting languidly about, patiently waiting for the tiniest of breezes to catch their mainsail and move them southward, they often thought of the friends and family they had left behind. They spoke of their "real" home back in California, thousands of miles away, never with a thought of wanting to go back, but with a sense of sweet nostalgia.

At times when a burial cave was discovered on an [illegible] island someone would say, "Gee, I wish my friends were here to see this". Or maybe it was their aunt's name that was invoked, "Wow, Aunt Marilyn would love this [illegible] we dived for, wish she was here".

So many exotic and unusual sights were seen, so many different foods were sampled, and who wouldn't want their Grandma to smell the ubiquitous Frangi Pangi flower that was being worn in their hair or around their neck. They shared with each other, every exciting discovery, but still the phrases came out, I wish so and so could see this.

The desire to share the experience with someone back home was strong in each one.

Even letters were few and far between, as there were few post offices in the areas being explored. However, at a stop in Papeete, Tahiti they picked up a gem, a letter at the local postal station. It was from family friends in Los Angeles. They were flying to Tahiti to cruise with the family for several weeks. Clean white pants were dug out of salt encrusted sea bags, sleeping areas were aired out, supplies were checked, extra water jugs were filled, and in general the boat was made ready for some of those familiar faces that had been yearned for. Great excitement was the roll call of the day.

The Faa'a Tahiti airport was seven miles from where the boat was tied stern-to on a bollard along the shore of Papeete. At four in the morning of the day of the friend's arrival the entire family rowed ashore and walked the seven miles to greet the plane. It was daylight when the plane arrived. Deep emotion was on every face as they hugged and kissed and squealed, "You're from Home, You're from Home". 540 days. At last . . . familiar faces.

Ho Hum,
Another Day At Catalina

Our 36' sloop, Zephyrus was rocking gently at anchor in a small cove at the west end of Catalina Island. Streaks of sun were shining through the crack of the cabin doors. My husband and I were cuddled down in the forward berth, barely awake and squinting at the brightness of the California summer morning. Suddenly we heard a shout from the shore, "Get in here, get in here now". Our children, Rebecca 16, Rex 12, and Russell 10, slept ashore on the rocky beach, where a group of our friends were also. It was rare to be summoned by a panicky sounding shout by anyone. We quickly jumped into our dinghy, I was in short shorts, a brief top (some may remember the 70's , when we all burned our bras) and barefoot. Paul had shorts on, also barefoot.

Paul rowed as fast as possible and soon we landed ashore, where several of our friends pulled our boat up and told us to go to Russ's tent. We found Russ prone on his sleeping bag, holding his stomach and obviously in pain. One of our boating friends, a pediatrician looked Russ over, and told us to get him to the hospital immediately.

He said the five hour trip back to Marina del Rey, Los Angeles, on our boat was not a possibility. He needed to go now. Paul called the Coast Guard, gave him our coordinates and our situation. Within fifteen minutes a Coast Guard helicopter arrived on the bluff, about 60 feet above us. The men scrambled down the hill with a stretcher. They placed Russ's sleeping bag on the stretcher and gently placed him on it. It took the two Coast Guard men, Paul, and three other friends to navigate the rough, slippery, rock covered hill to the waiting plane.

The decision was made that I would go with Russ, Paul would sail back home with the other two children and then meet me at the hospital later that night. As the men carried the stretcher up the hill, I looked down at my bare feet and up at that steep and rough terrain. A dear friend slipped off her thongs and tossed them to me, shouting at me, *"Go, Go, you can do it, you can do it"*. A gesture, an encouragement and a sacrifice I will never forget.

There was no time to row out to the boat and dress more appropriately, I slugged up the hill and boarded the plane just as they strapped Russ in for the ride to the mainland. As we rose in the air, I looked back down at the beach and saw Paul, Rebecca, Rex, and all of our friends waving to us.

Despite the seriousness of the situation, I could not help but enjoy looking at the incredible view of the ocean and the islands and the mountains in the distance. I was happy, however, when they finally closed the open door and we were snug inside the roar of the helicopter.

An ambulance was waiting for us when we landed and off we went to the hospital. Russ was diagnosed with appendicitis and was rushed into surgery, just before it was about to burst. While he was in surgery, I had a chance to look at myself. Uncombed hair, no makeup, not even a purse, not exactly very well dressed for the big city hospital and to conclude the total couture look, I was lugging around that darn sleeping bag. Of course, I tried to ignore how I looked, because the big picture was Russ and it was with great relief that he made it to surgery in time and would be fine in a few days.

Paul arrived at the hospital late that night with a jacket for me and my purse and the first thing that I did was shove that sleeping bag at him and say, *"Here, it's your turn to carry it"*.

Twice Around The Mark

"Sand babies" we called them in the '50s and '60s. A generation of children put down for their naps in the shade of an outrigger on a Malibu beach. California babies born and bred to the touch and taste of disintegrated rock—loose, gritty, grains of sun bleached sand.

They were the offspring of some of the heartiest catamaran sailors ever to round a mark. Names that are still well known today.

But what of those toddlers who were lulled to sleep by the ageless rhythm of surf meeting shore? Whose first tactile sensations were not of satin and lace, but cold salt water and hot sand on their tiny feet? Babies who lay cuddled in Turkish toweling under improvised tents while Mom and Dad raced out to X-mark.

Aromas of old seaweed, and Sea & Ski lotion filled their little sunburned noses. They grew up eating peanut butter and jelly sand. And then, one day, they too learned to launch a beach boat through February surf.

Only now, Daddy's boat, lovingly made by himself of wood and eucalyptus poles, originally fitted out with cotton sails, was set aside. Fiberglass was where it was at and a new generation was setting Dacron sails of Hobies, Prindles, Toronados, Nacras, etc.

"Junky Joe was my first boat," said Roy Seaman, one of Warren Seaman's sons raised on that sacred Malibu sand. "It was a catamaran built from salvaged trimaran floats with arms and pieces and parts stolen from trash bins in Malibu. I launched it at the old Malibu Yacht Club. I was ten years old. Six months later it broke up in the surf, but by then I was hooked on cats.

"My next boat was a 12' Malibu Outrigger, then an 18' Outrigger. Next I saild a Hobie 16, a Toronado and a Nacra 5.2. Right now I'm sailing a Rioland 36' Nacra. I like to get places fast!"

Getting places fast has earned Roy first place at the '73 Toronado Nationals and the '75 and '76 Nacra Nationals. In 1974 he placed third in the World's Toronado Championship.

"My boat can go 35 mph. That means I can get to Marina del Rey (California) from Latigo (his home just north of Malibu) in twenty minutes! I can't drive it in my car that fast," said Roy.

Although informal and laid back, plenty of drive and ambition lurk behind Roy's easy grin

He took over his brother Gary's batten business about five years ago, which keeps him busy manufacturing battens for Prindles, Nacras, Toronados and hang gliders. He is also a Nacra dealer.

"My dad and I have seen the catamaran evolution take place. And it's not over yet. It's true that catamarans are not idiot-proof, but the practicality of a leadless, lighter boat, and the fact that it's cheaper and faster than mono-hulls, means it is THE boat of the future.

"That's one thing my dad and I agree on. We've sailed a lot together on big boats. Sometimes we both want to be the skipper and then we argue a lot. Unless he is the designated skipper. Then I take orders. Actually, we've always gotten along pretty well.

"He never really taught me to sail, never sat me down and said, 'Now do it this way!' As I grew up at Malibu, I learned from watching my dad, and that was enough

"We're just a sailing family, I guess. My son Jeremy is five and already sailing with me. He'll be the third generation to sail. And my brother Gary just won the world's speed record in England."

Since his early days at Malibu where Gary Seaman designed and sailed experimental hydrofoil cats he has quested for the ultimate speed on the ultimate sailing machine. Now a design engineer at Tencate Windsurfing Co. based in Holland, he recently designed a fourteen pound 2.85 meter windsurfer that broke the world's speed record for windsurfers at the annual Player's Contest in England.

The old record was 19 knots. Gary's windsurfer came in at 23 knots.

Besides fathering his two ocean-loving sons, Warren Seaman was one of the first members of the Malibu Catamaran Club which merged in 1953 with the Malibu Yacht Club.

Warren designed the first Malibu Outrigger, using innovative materials such as a painter's drop cloth for a sail and a eucalyptus pole for a gaff.

Since that first $35.00 Seaman designed boat there has been a long list of ocean racing, award-winning catamarans either designed, built, or skippered by Warren. The boat building CSK Catamaran Co., in which Warren has an interest has produced, among others, *Seasmoke, Patty Cat, Allez Cat, Imua, Polynesian Concept* I, and *Machete*

All three male members of the Seaman family have turned their recreation into their business. It's hard to say where one stops and the other starts. They have a lot in common with another Southern California, the Hobie Alters.

Paula Alter's entire life is immersed in the world of sailing. Aside from sailing to racing and promoting Hobie Cats, she also writes for "Hobie Hotline Magazine."

"I studied biology in school," said Paula. *"but I hated it. So when Dad asked me to write an article for him I knew I could do it because, after all, I have first hand access to Hobie Cat racers*

"My brother Hobie, Jr., in addition to everything else he has won, placed first in the Champion of Champions race n November in Texas. My family was so excited we could hardly stand it! My other brother, Jeff, won the 16' Hobie Cat Nationals, and my dad has won so many races I can't even remember them all."

Paula is also in the winner's circle. In September, she placed first in the 14' Hobie Cat Women's Nationals in Lake Tahoe, California.

"I was shocked when I won the Nationals. I felt that people expected me to be a hot competitor because Hobie is my dad, but the truth is, I've just recently started sailing on my own. I've always crewed for my dad or my brothers. It's pretty exciting to do it by myself," said Paula proudly.

"Those of us who are just beginning to compete in women's events are doing it for all women skippers. We really haven't been taken seriously. I couldn't even get a job as a crew on a big boat because I was a woman. I had to start off as a cook and little by little show them that I was a capable crew. It was an uphill battle and I'd like to make it easier for other women."

Another area of life that Paula tries to make a little easier is fitting a boy friend into her family's lifestyle. *"We all travel a lot together, going to various races from San Felipe to South Africa, which is hard on a serious relationship. Also, we can't stop talking about sailing. We get caught up in the excitement of a race. Going over the details is fun and exhilarating for our family, but who else would care?*

"My mom has supported me in everything I've done—skiing, sailing, traveling, whatever. Mom says, 'It's wonderful, do it!' My dad taught me to sail and he never even got mad at me. But maybe that's because my dad is . . . well, he's real mellow."

Warren Miller is another father who took time off from his business to teach his offspring to sail. Warren sailed a P-Cat, then a Toronado. He will soon be sailing a new boat when he's not at work filming ski and sailing movies. His youngest son, Kurt, shares his enthusiasm for ocean racing.

"When I was younger," said Kurt *"there was a lot of competition between my dad and myself. I got out of ski racing because I was known as Warren Miller's son. But that's pretty much over. I'm older and I can give him advice now.*

"My dad and I are looking forward to racing a J-24 together," said Kurt. *"I'm not sure who'll be the skipper. I guess we'll trade off at first and decide later.*

"My dad always pushed me, but never too much. He's not that way. He taught me to sail when I was eight. By the time I was thirteen I knew I wanted to be in the Olympics someday.

"It's a goal I set and I work hard toward it." said Kurt.

A big step on the way to his goal was taken at the North American Finn races in August. Kurt captured a second.

"I had just started sailing Finns when I got that second. Since then I've sailed them a lot." he said. *"I also work out at a nautilus gym, so I'll be in pretty good shape for the Olympic trials. If I don't make it this time, I'll be back in '84."*

Kurt is twenty, so he still has time to achieve his childhood dream. Determined to win, but modest about his accomplishments, Kurt said, *"I don't want compliments, even from my family. When the Olympics are over I'm going back to school. I'll probably take advertising or marketing. I'll work a few other places first, but then I'll probably work in the Warren Miller Production Co. I want to work and live in a place I like.*

"If I lived somewhere other than the California coast, I'd probably be racing motorcycles or something. I'm glad I live at the beach and race boats. One thing is for sure—adventure runs in our family!"

Adventure is also what motivates Mike Hinman, third-place winner of the '78 Prindle Nationals.

"The thrill of speed is what I like. Sailing is the biggest part of my life," said Mike. *"I wouldn't want to live without it. In fact, my biggest fear is that something might happen to me that would prevent me from sailing.*

"I guess that no matter what, I'd hang around boats and sailors, though. Even if all I could do was take pictures, I couldn't ever be away from the water. The ocean is my home"

Mike is equally at home and just as dedicated when working at the Catamaran Store, a western distributor for Prindle. *"I couldn't sail something I didn't believe in,"* said Mike. *"Not only do I think it's the best boat for your money, but we have really active fleets for racing and having fun. There are 4,500 Prindle sailors out there already so you're one of a large family when you sail a Prindle."*

Mike's sailing involvement also started in his own family. His father, Dick Hinman, bought his first boat, a 12' Malibu Outrigger, at a garage sale in Reseda, California.

"I put it together backwards with the ama on the wrong side," said Dick. *"I took it down to the Malibu Yacht Club and asked a member who was sitting on the beach, 'How do you sail one of these?' He volunteered to go out with me. After showing me a few basics he jumped off and swam to shore. I brought the boat in through the surf and that was how it all started."*

"Mike really started sailing with me when he was 12," recalled Dick. *"We sailed Glasser, a silly old flat-bottomed cat that was always last to the windward mark but moved like a railroad train downwind. I'd get so discouraged. I'd tell Mike, 'Let's call it quits and hit the beach,' but Mike always had a fierce determination to keep going and so we always did. Mike would say, 'Wait till the next leg, Dad—then we'll catch up!'"*

Dick went on to sail *Amani*, a C-class cat, but by then Mike had sailed a hydrofoil one summer and was now sailing his own Hobie 14. Later, Mike changed to Prindles.

"He really caught the excitement of racing with his own boat when he was the master," said Dick. *"He didn't have his weight or size yet, so he was turtled as often as not. He was too light to right his Hobie in those days so I'd wait until I couldn't see him anymore and then go out and find him.*

"I guess I tried to show Mike the same amount of patience that my dad used to show me, along with a deep intensity of interest in what he was doing."

Mike still remembers those early trial-and-error sailing days. *"My dad would watch me race at Malibu and make mental notes of what I did. As soon as I hit the beach he'd be drawing in the sand, showing me what I needed to do and we would consult before and after every race. He taught me everything I need to know—the fundamentals like making the boat go, capsizing and bringing her up again."*

Those lessons paid off. Mike is the #1 Prindle sailor in California—winner of the California State Points Champion in '78 and '79.

What do these family have in common? Is it something in their genes? Is it heredity or environment that draws each new generation to the sea? Is it a turn of their personality or a recurring family character trait?

The competitiveness is there—against other boats, their own past performances, and the vagaries of nature. They want to win!

They run in a pack around the mark and yet so many of these sailors seem like loners seeking solitude on a lonely ocean.

Sometimes narrow in their perspective, sailing has become not just a hobby but a way of life, often lucrative, with one or more generations making a living in boating related occupations.

Seemingly, the way of life transcends generation gaps. Family relations seem easy, with only a slightly rough transition when the kids take over the helm for the first time.

Without exception, they are active families. Dad or Mom still hike out if junior's on the helm and vice versa. These families that sail together seem to bail together when the going is rough. Perhaps the secret to their success of communicating is nothing more than the unending supply of sea stories any sailor worth his salt has stowed away. Common interest and a good yarn may be the tie that binds these California sailing families together.

Ruth Broward lives in Bellingham, WA. She sailed most of her life, first on Malibu Outriggers, then a 26' Thunderbird that her husband, Paul, built from plans. Next came a 36' Lapworth sloop, Zephyrus. Paul and Ruth cruised the South Pacific with their three children for two years.

Sailing Stories

Broward Seaside Press
Bellingham WA