



C.C.R.C. CROSSES THE POND.



Most of us have, as is normal during the winter months, put away our boats, sat in front of blazing fires, visited Boat Shows, caught up with family - neglected during the sailing season, and thought about sunny days past and those to come. Not so two intrepid members: Denis Coates and Denise Cartlidge.

Each have recently undertaken trips to the far side of the Atlantic, Denis to deliver an Oceanis 43 from La Rochelle to St Martin in the Virgin Islands and Denise to



participate in the EUROPA 92, a Round the World Rally. Denise was in a yacht which will make even PENROSE III look small, a Nordia 61, OYINBO. In spite of two broken spinnaker poles and a broken boom they won their class in the first two legs and took line honours in the first. In the true spirit of C.C.R.C. race reporting each has provided an account of their voyage the first of which I am happy to reproduce in these pages.

Denise's account will appear in the next issue.

SAILING SECRETARY'S COLUMN

You don't need reminding, I am sure, that the season is fast approaching and like you I am trying to find time and suitable weather to get the boat ready for the first events in the coming C.C.R.C. calendar. I am looking forward to my first season as Sailing Secretary, and would like to thank Peter Wallace for providing the basis of the 1991 Programme which has required little alteration from me.

A couple of changes for this year though, the first being the introduction of a late April Bay Race weekend incorporating an Open Race on the Saturday which we hope will give an early opportunity to gain some new members. A correction to the provisional programme already distributed will be that the start time of the

Saturday race will be 14.00hrs, not 12.00hrs as previously stated. This should give everyone an opportunity to get to the start on time!

Secondly, through an introduction provided by Richard Creer, we hope to run a Sunday morning Bay Race off Cherbourg, possibly in conjunction with the local club. I hope members who may be returning from cruises or the Shroder Cup will join those who will have just raced over from Chi to provide a good turnout.

CLUB ADDITIONS

Those Seals have been at it again this winter, they have been breeding! ARD RIGH, will be joined this season by two new boats SEAL OF AP-

PROVAL with Patrick Denis at the helm and CL with Peter Lilywhite at hers. At the time of writing it is unclear as to which fleet they will be sailing in, but there are obvious attractions to their being together in one or other.

This confusion is not just limited to which Seal wants to go into which fleet, Walter Brown declared ARDRIGH for the Alpha fleet, Chris Brown sent in a declaration for the Beta. I think I will keep well clear at the first start and keep a weather eye on who is holding the stick!

I would like to welcome both Patrick and Peter to the club and wish you an enjoyable first season in the club. I particularly hope you will keep Walter in line and give him a hard time this season!!

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to some other new members, Richard Hodder who joins us with his Moody 31, ELEANORA, and Drummond Challis, who had an outing with us as a visitor when we visited Yarmouth last September. Drummond has a Carter 30, LIZA OF LANGSTONE. Peter Redell joins us with a Halberg Pacific with the wonderful name of MUGWUMP, and David Seward adds another First to the Club's records, RITANNE III a First 405.

200 MILE RACE FOR 1991

It appears that there are a number of members planning on participating in the Fastnet Race later this year. Richard Creer, who plans to enter

GOLDENEYE, has investigated the qualifications for entry and assures me that a club race of at least 200 miles will count towards the necessary minimum race mileage that all entrants must complete. That being so, he has asked me to lay on a C.C.R.C. race to help fulfil this requirement.

My first response was to extend the Round The Island Race for two more laps, but that didn't go down too well! I therefore propose, if there are sufficient interested parties, to organise an extension to the Spring Bank Holiday trip to Le Havre.

The idea will be to run our normal race finishing at a mark off the entrance to Le Havre. Those participating in the 200 miler will round the mark, taking their time for the benefit of the standard race, continue on to a mark near St Vaast, and then return to Le Havre to rejoin the Cruise in Company, which Richard has volunteered to organise.

I would be grateful if all those who are interested in such a race would let me know as soon as possible so that we can decide as to its viability.

WATCH YOUR COURSES

During the winter months Walter and Chris Brown have been looking at the SNCs and PNCs with a view to (i) creating some new Passage Courses to cover those venues which are not covered by the existing ones, (ii) amend the existing SNCs and PNCs which currently use Deans Tail, which continues to be unusable due to the wreck clearance, and (iii) give a wider choice of Bay Race courses. I very much hope we will therefore be able to use these set courses for virtually every race this and coming seasons.

I would particularly like to thank Chris and Walter for the time they have taken to go right through lists creating and checking them all.

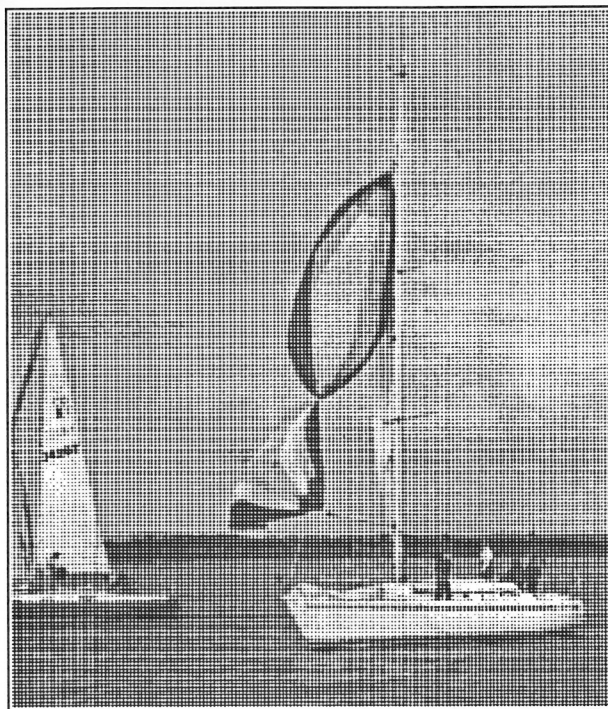
PLEASE, PLEASE will everyone discard or put away the courses published in previous year-books, we don't want anyone reading the correct number from the rail of the OOD only to charge off in a different direction to the rest of the fleet!! Please also note two other amendments which have been made. Firstly, due to the number of additional courses we have been forced to use course numbers from 1 up for both PNCs and SNCs, so check you are looking in the right list. Secondly, to add some interest to the Return to Chi Passage Races we have added three or four sub-courses. For example, if the OOD selects a course straight from Coronation (Hamble) to Chi, depending on the wind we can add a short sausage at the end rounding Chi to port then going to W.E. or Bay and back to Chi to finish. Obviously this gives the OOD the option to shorten, particularly the Beta fleet if time and tide look to be a problem. These sub-courses will be indicated by an appropriate letter, A, B, C etc.. Therefore a complete course will be shown as 25A or 36B for example.

At the time of writing, I still have received less than a third of the Declaration forms from members, and would request that these be sent to me as soon as possible. I would like to get the Race Instructions for the first five races out as soon as possible, and I am keen to see availability of potential OODs!

Finally, I would like to confirm that there is an additional paragraph in the Standard Sailing Instructions in the Year-book accepting the use of Autohelms this season. This was discussed at the last two A.G.M.s, and agreed in Committee, which I hope clears up the confusion that there seemed to be last season.

I wish everyone a very successful and enjoyable sailing season, and look forward to seeing you all on the water.

Brian Dandridge
Sailing Secretary



TREASURER'S TIPS

1. Where can you get £500,000 for only £25?

At your insurance company. MDL plc has decreed that all berthholders must have at least £1 million third party liability cover, rather than the more normal limit of £500,000 as recommended by the RYA. Hence, with effect from April 1, 1991 all of us in Northney will have to increase our cover.

(The moral of this is that if you are going to be hit by another boat, make sure it comes from Northney! Ed.)

2. Current prices of a 3 litre tin of Micron CSC antifouling RRP £67.50
Seateach, Emswth £60.00
Emswth Marine Exch. £58.69
- Any Others??

3. Next time you are at the theatre, check the prices before ordering a round of drinks at the interval - if there are three of you, a half bottle of champagne may be cheaper than three gin and tonics. Also while on the subject of G & T's - the pre-packed "doubles" which sold for £2.50 at the boat show can be had from British Rail buffets at £1.69!

4. Lastly, to those who thought I was guilty of racial prejudice in changing to The Royal Bank of Scotland, our first quarter's interest was "118 compared to £63 for the same period last year from that" other country's" bank.

J.L.

SPRING COMPETITION

We would like to know as accurately as possible what Mike was saying when the above photo was taken by Freddie Kemp. (1) To his crew, (2) about Freddy for taking this photograph, and (3) about the Editor for publishing it.

Answers on a postcard to Helen Smith as she is probably the only person who can judge the accuracy of the answers.

CARTLIDGE CAR WRECK

With all the recent snow and ice it is easy to forget the sudden cold snap back at the beginning of December that brought several inches of snow in the Surrey and Sussex areas. Bill and Denise Cartledge certainly won't.

They decided to drive down from London to join those of us participating in the Winter Series for lunch at H.I.S.C.. In the late morning on a stretch of the A3 north of Petersfield Bill hit a patch of black ice and the car left the road demolishing itself and half a derelict house.

I am happy to report that although Bill received a fractured sternum, and both he and Denise were severely bruised and shaken they have completely recovered although Denise was getting nervous as to whether she was going to be fit enough for the Atlantic crossing.

FOR SALE

1 UFO 27, Never Raced or Rallied(!), currently ashore at Sparkes Boatyard. Yes, The Advocate is on the market, asking price £12,500 for private sale, (£13,500 through Opal Marine.

1 Olivetti M200 IBM compatible personal computer. 2 x 3.5" Floppy Disks, 640 x 400 resolution colour display, almost new, £425.
If interested please ring Brian on 07918-6132.

HARBOUR NOTES

In January, Havant lost its most famous veteran yachtsman, Sir Alec Rose. Born in Kent, Sir Alec ran a greengrocery business in Portsmouth for many years. Unlike many of his contemporary "Round The Worlders" he financed his solo voyage in *LIVELY LADY* out of his own pocket, with virtually no outside sponsorship.

Sir Alec and Lady Dorothy lived latterly in Warblington, and although the main funeral service was conducted in Portsmouth Cathedral, Sir Alec is buried at Warblington Church. This is a fitting spot, a mere field's breadth from the shore, almost opposite the Northney entrance and close to the ruined tower of Warblington Castle.

nineteenth century on the dangerous Haisborough Sands off the Norfolk Coast.

At a recent Commodores' reception at Langstone S.C., I had an update from Clive Ayling, the very pleasant young Police Liaison Officer, who looks after the Havant part of Marine Watch. (Yes, Maggie had to keep a straight elbow



Sir Alec Rose pictured in 1968 before setting off in his yawl Lively Lady for his historic round the world voyage. He is with his wife Dorothy and mascot 'Algy'

The church has a wealth of nautical connections. The framing of the porch is said to incorporate the timbers of a medieval ship. Many mariners, naval and mercantile, are either interned or commemorated in the church or churchyard. A stone near the north-east side of the building records the fate of William Palmer, who "lost his life and vessel going into Dublin in 1759", and of his wife and family who, doubtless left in poverty, did not long survive him. A bas-relief at the head of the stone depicts the shipwreck.

Another plaque, inside the church, commemorates the master of an East Indiaman which was lost in the early

once again.) He tells me that a single database of boat equipment details now covers the stretch of coast from the Thames to Lymington, and is extending westward over the next year or so to include the West Country. Sister organisations are coming into being in Wales, Scotland and the Midland Inland Waterways.

I arranged with him for application forms and information sheets to be sent to Pam Metcalf for circulation in a forthcoming mailing. If you are not a member already, please seriously consider joining. Marine Watch has proved its worth in the war against organised thieving from and of boats.

Hugh Caldwell

ATLANTIC CROSSING. DELIVER US FROM.....

During the latter part of September, 1990, in the calm and untroubled waters of the Solent, the sensible majority of CCRC members were celebrating a splendid sailing season of fair winds and fine days.

I was with you all in spirit. And I would have liked to be with you all in person.

Not for the first time that day, I said to another sailor; 'What are we DOING here - either we are both crazy or we are being punished for something we did or said. Whatever it was, it must have been really wicked.'

I don't think he heard me. We were 3 days into Biscay, slamming into short, steep, crested waves which seemed to defy gravity and nature. They came from all directions, occasionally flattened by torrential rain then whipped up again by South-west or North-west hoolies.

'Well,' I can hear you say, 'what's the problem?' We meet those conditions all the time in the Channel and race on. Nothing to make a fuss about, is there?'

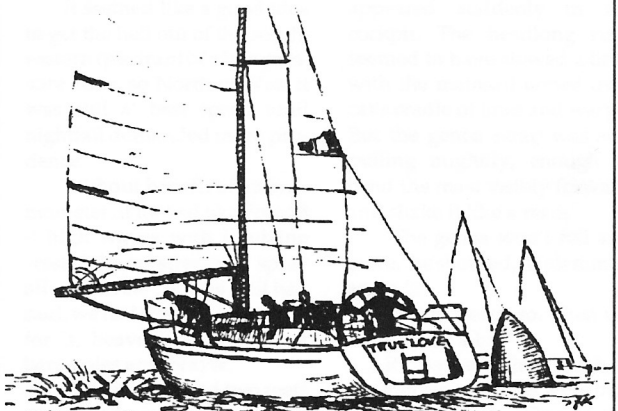
Let me add a few details. The sloop was fat, French, caravan style designed for the charter business in the West Indies. It was 45 feet overall, able to sleep 10, bristling with showers and heads and sailed like a galleon. This particular one leaked like a sieve, and had a diesel fuel spillage in the bilges which blended in with the vomit of two sea sick crew. The fresh water supply tasted foul, the main sail had lost two out of four battens, twelve of the sail slides had split and the roller genoa had jammed yet again. The boat had a really good fridge and a first rate motor - but no instruments other than a log/speedo. There was a V.H.F. a life-raft and we

could hear tapes anywhere in the boat, but I would have traded them all for a barometer, a marine band radio and an autohelm. But if you think about it, what need does a charter boat have for such niceties?

The main and genoa hal-yards did not have wire tails (another charter boat economy). As a precaution they would be re-roved every five days where they chafed over the sheaves.

Back in La Rochelle where I joined the boat with three total strangers it had seemed like a good idea to sail across the South Atlantic. But after seeing the appropriately named Cabo Villano looming out of the wet haze for the second time in eight hours I wasn't so sure about it. It was probably paranoia, but I began to feel like a pingpong ball which was being batted around Biscay by a series of lows who queued up for the chance to take a swipe at a 'pleasure' boat. This was Day 3 and the voyage was scheduled to last 6 weeks.

It was also the second day of 'four hours on, four hours off' which had been reduced to 'two hours on, two hours off.' The loud retching noises coming from down below didn't



ITS BETTER TO HAVE LOVED & LOST
THAN NEVER TO HAVE LOVED AT ALL

hold out much hope of that changing in the near future.

My companion, skipper and astro-navigator Neil, was much more phlegmatic than me. Those who earn their keep by small boat delivery have to be.

'It will be all right when we get round the corner,' he said, 'we'll pick up the Portuguese Trades and run all the way down to Madeira.'

'It could be much worse,' he added.

'It could?'

'Oh yes,' he said, 'it is much colder than this in winter.'

He went below to make yet another corned beef sarny.

ROUND THE CORNER

Neil was quite right. We passed the Cape of Eagles and the sun shone. The sea turned azure blue and settled into longer and lazier waves. We pumped the bilges and they didn't fill up again. Two young men came back from the dead and we all had hot meals which stayed down. We passed the lights of La Coruna and settled into a watch system which gave the luxury of four hours on and eight off. It became quite civilised on board and the ship's routine of watches, meals and sun/star sights laid down a pattern which was undemanding and enjoyable. Cape Trafalgar passed to port, unseen beneath a black velvet sky studded with stars and planets. I can tell the difference between stars and planets

now. Stars twinkle, planets don't.

The North-East Trades blew us comfortably along our course to Madeira over a warm South Atlantic Ocean. The boat had no off-wind sails, (charter boats frown upon spinnakers and even more on spinnaker users). We were not making much speed with the main blanketing the genoa, so it seemed like a good idea to donk with the engine rounding up our speed to six knots average. It also made a plentiful supply of ice for the beer.

With the engine compensating for a falling wind at about 38North and 14West it took a couple of watches to realise that the wind had veered slowly from a Northerly to the Southerly quadrant.

At first it did not seem significant as our run became a reach and the genoa began to pull well - so well that a couple of rolls seemed prudent. We could make 6 knots without the engine, then 7 knots and finally 8 and sometimes 9 knots with 2 reefs in the main and a well rolled genoa. We were on course, West of South, making good time for Madeira.

'It would do a lot for my peace of mind,' I said to Neil, 'if we could get a weather forecast for this area.'

'Wouldn't make any difference, would it?' Neil replied.

'Why not?'

'Nothing we could do about it, is there? We are too far from land to make for shelter.'

There seemed to be a cold ring of reality in there somewhere.

'What choices do we have,' I asked Neil 'if we do get caught out?'

'Run before it, heave-to, or bare poles' he replied, 'you pays your money and you takes your choice.'

Therein lay the philosophy of the Ocean sailor.

ALL SHIPS, ALL SHIPS

We did eventually get a weather forecast - and it was bad news.

The V.H.F. kept a listening watch on Channel 16. We would transmit to all ships occasionally, just to see if there was any response. No replies had been received for three days but that was not unusual for even when we saw ship's lights at night there was no response. So it came as a complete surprise when an 'All ships' call was answered by a Royal Canadian Air Force Patrol Aircraft somewhere out of sight. Her navigator was cheerful and helpful. He promised to get us a weather forecast for the region and call us back. As the yacht had neither sail number, call sign or name (and to complicate matters she was a French yacht destined for a Dutch Island sailing under the red ensign) she was christened British Sailing Yacht Atlantic Bimbo.

The R.C.A.F. did come back the following day as promised. Maybe it was the yacht's name that attracted them. Whatever it was, they were far away over the horizon when they told us that there was a complex, 990 millibar low pressure zone some 100 miles South of our position with core wind speeds of 55-60 knots.

It seemed like a good idea to get the hell out of the south-eastern quadrant of a low pressure zone, so North of West it was and at best speed until nightfall demanded more prudence.

Without benefit of an anemometer, it looked like Force 8 - 'high waves with tumbling crests, foam streaked, spray affects viz etc', but, as Neil had said, we had three choices - run for it, heave-to and hope or bare poles and prayer.

The mainsail had two reefs in (a third would have helped but was not built in) and a well rolled genoa had more bulk than area as we ran through a

black and stormy night. It was certainly uncomfortable but it did not feel unsafe. The galley was definitely out of bounds, but Neil managed to produce his speciality - corned beef sarnies. Our two young crew had succumbed to mal de mer yet again, a complete waste of all those cooked meals from the halcyon days. There were complications this time, one wanted his Mummy and the other wanted his Maker, neither of whom were available.

The knockdown came before dawn. How long before was difficult to judge as spray affected the visibility. Atlantic Bimbo gracefully dipped her spreaders and took her time coming back up again. Then she took off like an enraged hippo, ploughing through some of the waves and leaping off the others.

'Do you want to reef or drive?' It was Neil yelling in my ear.

Driving seemed like the lesser of two evils. I took the wheel, a really large one thoughtfully covered in hide.

'Don't let her gybe, will you?' he yelled. I promised not to gybe.

Neil disappeared forward. I caught a glimpse of him occasionally through the spray, clipped to the granny bars, struggling to get the mainsail down.

I had my problems too. Bimbo was determined to gybe and broach, in that order. She seemed to resent all my efforts to prevent it. She went faster and faster, roaring down the fronts and climbing swiftly up the back of the waves, spraying white water past my ears and rocking like a cartoon clock. It seemed to go on for ever, with no sign of Neil coming back from the base of the mast.

It was daylight when he appeared suddenly in the cockpit. The headlong rush seemed to have slowed a little with the mainsail tamed by a cat's cradle of lines and warps. But the genoa scrap was still pulling mightily, enough to bend the mast visibly forward and shake it like a reed.

'The genoa won't roll any more,' he shouted, 'it's jammed again.'

'Try to heave-to. Then we can tidy up a bit.'

It was just light enough to see that some waves were bigger than others. One of the more kindly ones allowed Bimbo to swing swiftly through an arc and come head

crimecure

Are you concerned about the security of your yacht in these times of increased break-ins and burglaries? Perhaps you should consider an alarm system.

ANDY REYNOLDS (RIMAU) is an agent for the SEALARM HARBOURGUARD MARINE SYSTEMS. Harbourguard is a security system linked via radio to a base station in most marina offices which logs your arrival and departure and monitors your yacht for intruders, fire, gas and bilge flooding.

Trading as CRIMECURE I also supply and install all aspects of security equipment including intruder and fire alarms, access control systems, CCTV, and security lighting.

For further information please contact Andy on 0798 813898.



to wind for the first time in many days. With a scrap of genoa aback and her wheel locked hard over she was docile and manageable again, a semi stable platform on a turbulent sea, fore-reaching gently at 1.5 to 2 knots.

I felt completely knocked. I think a marathon run would be easier on the system and nerves. I sat down and said so. Very rudely.

Neil seemed unconcerned about it all.

'Got some water in my wellies', he said. 'I'm going below to change.'

Fancy a corned beef sarny?

THE DEEP BLUE

A day later we were under way again, punching into an angry sea made awesome by strong sunlight. Appetites and morale came back slowly. Gradually the weather improved. Then the South Atlantic was benign and azure blue again, the Trades were gentle, the dolphins schools visited often to scratch their backs on the rudder and keel. We slipped easily into the cosy routine of watches, sun and star sights, meals and chatter.

Gradually we crept across the South Atlantic chart towards Madeira. Every day we aimed to cover 150 sea miles, sometimes exceeding it by a few miles, often boosting a poor sailing performance by donking.

Delivery skippers are dominated by schedules. Arriving at your destination on time is the hallmark of achievement, a late arrival or a diversion to another port is anathema. This consideration takes top priority over everything else. Bad or unexpected weather is a nuisance, crew comfort a low priority, attitudes to safety a bit cavalier.

'We lost two days back there,' Neil said. 'We will have to make them up on the next leg.'

'How can we do that?'

'We allowed three days for a stopover in Madeira. We can cut it back a bit.'

'What about repairs to the sails?'

'We can fix the sliders back on. We won't need a sail-maker for that.'

'What about the battens?'

'We can manage without them.'

'So how long will we stay in Madeira?'

'Just long enough to re-fuel and re-provision.'

'I was hoping to have a good look at Madeira.' This was one of our young crew, an ardent youth newly released from University as a fully fledged Social Scientist.

'Nothing to see,' said Neil cheerfully, 'just a lump of volcanic rock sticking out of the Atlantic.'

SHIPS AND MEN ROT IN HARBOURS

That storm off Portugal faded from memory surprisingly quickly. Neil had sailed through many storms in several oceans. He had difficulty in remembering them.

'You put it out of your mind,' he said 'just remember the good times. On most delivery trips you have bad weather for less than 10% of the time, so it is easier to just forget about it.'

The lights of Puerto Santo came up off the northern tip of the Madeira archipelago during the graveyard watch. We tied up in Funchal harbour before mid-day, eight deep in rafts. There were about 80 yachts of all types and nationalities there. Some were going east to west, many were coming back from the Americas. In size they varied from a 7 metre Dutch wooden sloop to a 25 metre superyacht from West Germany.

Neil pointed to several of the yachts in various stages of neglect.

'That one,' he pointed to a rusting steel sloop, 'has been here for two years. Abandoned by her owner.'

'Over there,' he said, pointing to a dismasted sloop, 'she was towed in by fishermen last year with no-one on board.'

'What happens to them now?' I asked.

'If you want to buy one,' he said. 'see the Harbourmaster.'

'I don't think I would want to buy one. They seem to be unlucky boats.'

In the end we compromised over our stay in Madeira. We left at midnight the following day. Our young social scientist made it easier. He had had enough and jumped ship.

WESTWARD HO

'Have we got a passage plan for this leg, Neil?'

'Yes. We have a waypoint entered into the Magellan just east of the point at St Maarten.'

'What about the weather?'

'At this time of year,' Neil

said, 'hurricanes hardly ever happen. But just in case they do, we shall follow the classic advice; go south till the butter melts, then go west.'

'Just two points, Neil,' I said. 'one, even you don't have much faith in the hand held Magellan. It gobbles up batteries and often does not give you a fix anyway. Two, the Atlas of the Oceans reckons that at this time of year there is an average of two hurricanes per month.'

'We don't rely on the Magellan. It is just a back-up. The sextant and sight reduction tables are more reliable. And if we do get in the path of a hurricane we go south on starboard.'

'Don't worry about it,' he said, 'navigation and weather are the least of our problems on this leg. Have we got enough beer?'

'Provided that the passage lasts less than 28 days, yes. Fresh food for as long as it lasts, then it is dried and canned.'

'Plenty of corned beef,' I added.

We had 200 litres of fuel in the main tanks and another 300 litres in drums lashed to the pushpits. It was to fulfil two purposes - make enough ice for the beer and keep up our daily average of 150 miles so that we could arrive on schedule.

And for the first time Atlantic Bimbo earned some brownie points. The fresh water tanks held almost 400 litres; more than enough for our needs.

Neil did not have much faith in the Trade Winds.

'Often they don't blow at all. Then they blow from the wrong quarter. You must have a lot of time on your hands if you hope to cross the South Atlantic under sail.'

An observation which turned out to be true. When the wind did blow, it was light and variable. We donked for 12 hours a day, and made as much progress as possible for the remainder, helped by a west flowing current of half a knot.

The time zone was adjusted by adding 20 minutes to the day watches as we made our westing. The days slid by with almost monotonous regularity, relieved occasionally by sighting ships heading east for Europe or the Azores. We made contact with several asking for a weather forecast. One mentioned a hurricane far away bothering North Carolina. We also asked if we could

be seen on their radar scanners (we did not have a radar reflector). The reply was usually negative.

The other daily sport was working up the DR position on the chart to see how close it was to the calculated position. It was always gratifying to be really close and have it confirmed by a sight reduction. The hand held Magellan often took up to 20 minutes to confirm that it could not give us a position, but at other times it worked like magic. More satellites are needed up there yet.

Although the most constant problem was how to keep cool, we were blessed with occasional tropical rainfalls. These prodigious downpours produced the bizarre sight of three naked, whooping men taking a shower and doing their laundry at the same time. We must have looked like a ship of fools at times like that, but there are no witnesses out there.

Sanity returned when the rain stopped, leaving the problem of what to cook for the main meal of the day, a job which rotated with the watch.

The weather stayed hot and fair, the Trade Winds blew, our fuel lasted the course and we had made up all the lost time as we approached the Lesser Antilles. It was time to think of journey's end.

'What happens when we arrive, Neil?'

I had vague notions of cheering crowds, boats dressed overall and welcome committees for the intrepid crew of Atlantic Bimbo.

'We anchor off, clean the boat thoroughly, inside and out, everyone has a shower and a shave, we put on clean clothes and we just slip in like any other charter boat which has been round the bay.'

'Then what?'

'We get the longest, coolest beer in the world. Then we go home.'

Denis Coates

NEWS FROM CANADA.

Many members of the C.C.R.C. will remember David and Margo Almond who used to sail a Dufour 1800, BIANCO, and left this country to set up in Canada.

Walter Brown received a letter from them just before Christmas which he has kindly provided for me to reproduce on the following page.

EDITOR

..... We have just renewed the lease on this fabulous house for another year and the business is up and running fairly steadily. We have made lots of new friends and learned a lot too! We are only now starting to feel at all settled - neither of us miss England so much but we do miss loved ones, friends and the familiarity which comes of living in a place for a long time.

Many things which you take for granted are different here, and there is great irritation with petty bureaucracy and unwarranted pretensions for example. You just cannot assume that things are as you expect them to be any more. Take an every day thing like shopping, where you expect that we eat and use the same familiar brand names. Wrong! The brand names are all mixed up, most of the products are totally unfamiliar and the labels don't actually say what goes in your dishwasher or in your clothes washing machine! There has to be the most awe-some choice of even the sim-

plest things, all of them hiding behind cute but meaningless names. No big deal on its own, but when you have this situation at every turn, it gets to you after a while! It took me months to figure out how to get money into a parking ticket machine because all directions and instructions are written with the assumption that people actually know what to do already! Local phone calls are free, for another example, but nowhere does it say this and neither does it say anywhere what is "local". Somehow, you are just assumed to "know" things over here! On the other hand life is very convenient in most ways. Food shops are open all hours and people here are so helpful and friendly. Service in anything is usually excellent by U.K. standards.

The most striking thing here is the huge abundance of the most dramatic natural beauty. Both Victoria, on Vancouver Island and Vancouver itself 40 odd miles away are situated in the loveliest of wa-

terfront settings, the waterways winding randomly into the cities and popping up where you least expect them. They both have incredible mountain backdrops, and the most impressive one in Victoria is actually in the U.S. less than 20 miles away! The climate is similar to that of central France, much warmer than the U.K. Summer is hot, sunny and reliable and quite dry while winter is mild but very wet on the coast. Frost and snow are very rare in Victoria, though up in the interior of the province it gets very cold indeed with lots of deep snow most of the winter. The rainfall and climate here encourage vigorous growth and in Victoria for example it seems that there is something flowering virtually all year.

We live in a most beautiful estate, literally a millionaires retreat! We have an incredible seaview over a scatter of wooded islands towards Vancouver and the Rockies in the far distance. On clear days we can see mountains about 80 miles away! The people in here are mostly retired, very kind and friendly but with an amazing lifestyle. One set of neighbours are in the oil business and moved here from Bermuda. They split their time between Oklahoma, Calgary, and California, and spend the summers in a house on one of the more remote Gulf islands. We had a weekend up there with them. They collected us in their speedboat and delivered us to the beach in front of the house, where we waded ashore. We swam, walked, cycled (no cars on the island) collected clams and oysters off the beach for supper, and sunbathed. We were intrigued by references to the Daddy-plane, which was to arrive on Sunday evening. At the appointed time a Twin-Otter float plane came in low over the sea in front of us, to check for floating logs. Having landed, it taxied in reverse up to some logs at the waters edge, so that all the Daddies could climb aboard dry-shod to be back at work for Monday morning.

We are also fascinated by the wild-life which abounds here, largely taken for granted by the locals. From our house we see fairly often eagles and ospreys, peregrine falcons, all kinds of ducks, geese, grebes, mergansers, divers, waxwings, and woodpeckers to name just a few. Animals are

not seen so often owing to the dense forest everywhere, but we have seen deer and racoons and a cougar was seen in the neighbourhood last winter. Sea mammals are very common, and also from the house we see seals (the aquatic kind, Walter) and sealions, porpoises, otters, and occasionally whales. Pods of killer-whales abound here and are an amazing sight, not in the least dangerous, but seeming to show off when people or boats are around.

One major disappointment here has turned out to be the sailing, surprisingly. It takes a while to get used to the fact that this is the land of bs, where you need to be very cautious about believing anything! There are more boats per head of population than you would believe possible, and everyone talks big about boating but the general level of competence is dreadful. The sailing water here is out of this world, but there are big drawbacks. Firstly, we are actually 50 miles from the open sea, and while the wind conditions are O.K. in the winter (typically F3-4, with 6 a rare catastrophe) its usually flat calm in the summer. Also, you pay a lot of money here for a really slow, old-fashioned tubby cruising boat, the sort of thing that went out in the U.K. back in the '60s. Thirdly, although they tear around in wildly over-engined motor boats, would you believe that North Americans don't actually know very much about sailing!! You only have to look at the way boats are set up and equipped to see the size of the problem. Everything over 26' has to have a wheel, barbeque and interior heater, while such luxuries as bilge pumps, heavy weather sails or functioning compass you may or may not find. Everything is powered by petrol by the way, and since the general ignorance covers this also, the accident record is appalling.

The business we have started is Clearway Computer Consultancy and Training Ltd, and its now paying its way after only 9 months or so. Margo mostly writes the courses for us and does consultancy while I look after the marketing, admin and finances. There is lots to do and we spend many an evening and weekend at it.....

David and Margo
Almond

The Seal Sailor's Wife

Such is the joy of our sailing
That one's love is never failing,
Each weekend out goes the Seal
Once the wife has stowed each meal.

Friday night's all rush and bustle
So that at the weekend there's no hustle,
As the businessman switches off completely
The working wife she behaves so sweetly.

Sat. and Sunday just fly by
With all on board having had to try,
Trimming sails and navigating all correct
Ensuring buoys are passed to best effect.

Sunday evening sees us all tied up and tidy
As work is suffered until next Friday,
But for the wife her work's not ended
For food and laundry must be tended.

Thus Monday sees the washing underway
Whilst Tuesday is the shopping day,
Housework, ironing and food all to do
Sees Wednesday and Thursday crossed off too.

And around comes Friday night once more
Perhaps the Sailor's Wife feels it's a chore,
But such is the joy of our sailing
That one's love is never failing.

Chris Brown - Ard Righ