

Vol 1 No 15 Continued . . .

Eighth Letter from the Captain, written, on board the HM² and completed in Papeete harbor on April 25, begins:

"To say that the matter of the incorrect and crudely altered zarpe preyed on my mind would be putting it strongly, but I must admit that I thought about it some on my long trip to the Marquesas."

PASSAGE 4, DAYS 1 THROUGH 27 -- "I won't give a day by day account of the passage since so many days were alike. In summary, the trip was a bit slow, as expected, due to the light and variable (at times non-existent) trade winds. The weather was generally fair, with warm days and comfortable nights. I wore my favorite sailing costume -- my birthday suit -- the whole way. It sure saved on laundry! My route took the HM² southwest at approximately 200 degrees magnetic, until I reached 4 degrees 30 minutes south, then nearly due west until I reached 130 degrees west, then southwest once more to Hiva Oa, at 9 degrees 48 minutes south, 139 degrees 2 minutes west.

"During the first week we made excellent speed (except for the second day which was windless), covering as much as 150 miles a day, with a fine boost, up to 2 k, from the south equatorial current. I found that the west-setting drift fell off dramatically at about 5 degrees south, so tried to stay north of that most of the way. At the end of the first week, I was predicting a 22 day trip and landfall by the 19th of March. Unfortunately the weather didn't cooperate. The winds soon lost their punch, and blew more from the east. They remained that way for most of the rest of the trip.

"During one four day period I ran due west wing and wing, with the jenny poled out and the mainsail rigged on the opposite side with a preventer to keep the boom from jybing. I found that the Aries vane could control this setup, when it wouldn't handle the spinnaker, but my speed averaged only 3.5 to 3.8 knots in the 6 to 7 knot east wind. As the days with light winds piled up, it was obvious that I wouldn't meet my optimistic prediction, but the favorable current still kept my average to better than 100 miles per day. My arrival in Atuona, Hiva Oa, at 10 AM on Tuesday March 24 brought the lapsed time of the passage to about 4 hours under 27 days.

"On the passage, my longest as a single-hander, I found a lot of comfort in the amateur shortwave radio. While I sorely missed the all band receiver-transmitter that got killed in my Atlantic misadventures the old Kenwood TS130 radio that B sent, from the shack at home, did a fine job of getting my signal out under the limited battery power. I called B every few days through ham operators on the west coast of the States. There is poor HF propagation to the east and mid-west, after 1200 hours UTC or 7 PM EST when B usually gets home from work. Sometimes on the weekends I could get a phone-patch through a mid-Atlantic station earlier in the day.

"The other radio activity -- in fact the greatest reassurance to me -- was my daily check-in with the Pacific Maritime Mobile Net on 14314 mhz at 0430 UTC. A group of about a half dozen land based amateurs in New Zealand, French Polynesia, Hawaii, and the US west coast kept track of me and a dozen other sailors making passages in various parts of the Pacific. Each of us in turn would give our position report and weather conditions. Then we would talk to each other and discuss our progress and problems, request advice, etc. For a lonely single hander, it was a very supportive atmosphere and a highlight of my day.

"When I arrived in Hiva Oa, I already knew several of the boats and their crews there from my radio contacts, and it was kind of like a homecoming. I can't begin to thank the net control stations and relays enough, for what they have done and are continuing to do for me and others sailing in the Pacific. They are a group of real pros. My special thanks go to Fred Boehm, KH6UY, Net Control, and to relays E5GZ, Les, in Maurea and ZILMA, Terry, in Auckland."

(Ed: I must interrupt to second K's remarks. Of course I knew about amateur radio, having gone so far as to obtain my Novice license, NA3JKQ; a few years ago, and had been thankful many times for K's calls to me, handled through amateurs in various parts of the country. What made all this take on even more significance for me during this cruise was being on the boat and actually hearing the net when "checked in" while we were passage making and when we were just listening while we were safe in harbor. You would naturally expect that the various sailors would be interested in each other's positions and conditions, but I was impressed with the real concern expressed for each sailor by the amateurs on land.

(Ed. cont: These are all volunteers, giving their time and energy, and providing their own equipment, to help others in a practical way with information) and in a less tangible way with supportiveness. Not to overdo my comments, but it's an emotional thing for me now. I already have the dedication for our book all planned -- to the amateur radio operators who help sailors. And when I get rich, a large donation is going to the organizations who promote this activity.)

"During my passage I saw only one other vessel, a freighter by her look at night, on the evening of March 9 at about 11 PM.. My position was 04 degrees 45 minutes south, 115 degrees 24 minutes west. There were several times I smelled what I thought might be fish-factory ships somewhere to windward. I was reminded a bit of the smells of the menhaden processing plants near Reedville, VA, but I never saw a thing. Other sailboats that made the passage further south later told me they had seen several "fish-factory" vessels.

"I heard no aircraft and I saw no jet trails during the four weeks. Occasionally I would have dolphins for company; once I found myself in the midst of hundreds of them on all sides as far as I could see. As usual, they gave me a peaceful friendly feeling. There were a very few seabirds except within a few hundred miles on either end.

"During the 3100 mile trip I motored forty hours, mostly on the second day south of the Galapagos, and one day about 2/3 of the way through the trip when the wind was flat calm and the motion caused by the northeast swells was made more comfortable with some way on.

"The Marquesas are high islands, rising up to 4000 feet directly from the sea. I first sighted Hiva Oa about noon on Monday March 23 at a distance of about 30 miles in haze. It seemed to get very little closer for hours. Since I couldn't make port by daylight on the 23rd, I slowed down with the object of being off Tahoku Bay in the morning. I was a bit overly cautious since the night was dark and the currents unknown, so I found myself with about 12 miles to go at daybreak in rather light winds.

"When I entered the anchorage at 9:30, Nicole and Patrick Chaix on *MAMAROU*, friends from San Cristobal in the Galapagos, came out to meet me in their dink, and pointed out a choice spot near the dinghy dock and showers! I had the bow anchor down at 10 AM. Some of the southeast swell found

its way into this less than perfectly protected spot, making the motion of the boats restless, so I soon had a stern anchor out as well. Before I was done, John and Eunice Wilcox from *HARMONY* and Tom and Mary Sager from *SAINT JEROME* dinged by and invited me to supper on *HARMONY*. The *HM²* had arrived!

"As soon as I could, I un-shipped my dinghy and slung it out over the side with my block and tackle arrangement; and proceeded to row ashore with my passport, boat documents, and the infamous zarpe. It was about a 2 mile hike into Atuona, around the end of the small bay; and over a ridge to the larger bay on the other side. The yachties in the anchorage told me that it is easy to hitchhike a ride into town. Sure enough; the first vehicle that came along, a pickup truck, stopped and let me climb in the back. It was a bouncy ride on the unpaved road but it got me to civilization in five minutes.

"The paperwork was quickly done at the gendarmerie. They didn't even want to see my zarpe from the Galapagos. Generally, that's the first thing a port captain asks for. I didn't argue about that! The gendarme was very professional and polite. He spoke almost no English but I had no problem, partly because the French speaking captain of a large yacht was there at the same time and I watched as he filled out his forms. With the basic formalities done, all that remained was to visit the bank and post a bond.

"In French Polynesia they require a cash escrow account of an amount sufficient to pay your way back to your original home. The bond can be avoided if you already have a valid airline ticket. I made my way to the Banque de Indo-Suez where a pleasant and competent looking Polynesian woman consulted a table and told me I would have to post an amount equal to \$1220 US! Since John Wilcox had already mentioned that he had posted 800 dollars per person, I argued that the amount was too high, but the lady stood firm. I told her I would come back Wednesday morning to complete the transaction; and after picking up a letter from B, making my promised arrival call to her at the post and telecommunication office; and buying a few basic groceries and some wonderful French bread, I headed back to the anchorage.

"After a most welcome shower in the facility next to the dinghy dock; I returned to the *HM2* for a bit of relaxation before my dinner date. The supper on *HARMONY* was nice, lots of good food and good talk. Laura Jean Wilcox, about 9 years old; seemed precocious, just like most of the yacht kids I've met. The family is from Maine. John is an electrical engineer and Eunice is an anesthesiologist. Both of the Sagers, the other guests on board, are from NYC where they work in the financial field. All in all it was a most pleasant evening. John assured me that his bond had been 800 dollars per person; however, it was paid directly by his broker to an account in Tahiti, so we reasoned that the amount must have been based on the fare from Papeete rather than the fare from the Marquesas.

"Wednesday morning early; *HARMONY* and *SAINT JEROME* departed for Fatu Hiva; and *MAMAOU* left for another anchorage on Hiva Oa. I hitchhiked into Atuona; this time in the back of an ancient Land-rover, to complete my paper work and explore the town. At the bank, I posted the bond, using travelers' checks and also got some working cash in French Polynesian francs at the rate of about 107 to the dollar. My friend, the bank official, confirmed my theory that the Wilcox family had gotten off easy, having been charged the Tahiti rate by mistake.

"In any case, I was legally set in French Polynesia for three months. I reported the fact to the gendarme so he could enter it on my green 'boat passport'. I looked around the town some more and made the

almost obligatory visit to the nearby graves of Paul Gaugin and Jacques Brel above the town. On the way back to the boat I stopped at Le Snack Bar for a hamburger and French fries, a glass of orange juice and an ice cream cone. The tab came to 10 dollars almost exactly. That's life in paradise, I guess, but it was worth it! I had been dreaming about these things for weeks.

"When I got back (this time in a shiny new Toyota Jeep look-alike that went out of its way to deliver me) it was so hot that I just took a siesta until about 3 PM. (everyone here observes this civilized custom and most everything closes from about 11 until 2). Then I went overboard and worked at cleaning up the very grungy topsides (a mixture of sea slime, tar, and gooseneck barnacles, as high as water could reach, deposited during my month at sea). Working with a heavy duty Scotch-brite pad, I got about 2/3 of the job done in an hour and a half of hard work.

"Later I spent another hour during laundry at the yacht facility by the dock. There was plenty of good water from a huge rusty steel tank, fed by a pipeline down the mountainside. The arrangement gave sun-warmed water for showers and laundry by mid-day, and cool water for drinking and boat tank filling in the early morning.

"Thursday was spent on the HM², drying laundry and taking it easy in the generally hot and humid conditions. It rained several times during the morning, dragging out my laundry job. The surge in the harbor had increased to the point where it was difficult getting ashore at the dock, as the waves would attempt to smash the dink against the concrete face.

"I devised a system, using about 100 feet of polypropylene line and a small anchor, dropping the dink anchor some distance off and rowing in to where I could get a bow line over a bollard; then I pulled the dink back out on the anchor line, to a point where it took a strong pull on the painter to get the boat to the dock. Then I'd leap ashore, taking care to time the movement for the moment when a wave wasn't washing over the top. It took some finesse, since the surface was slimy. Once ashore, I used a long line on the bow to pull the dink off to one side of the dock, and tied the line to a tree, leaving the dink about 30, feet out, riding the waves like a duck, and freeing space at the dock for others.

"At the HM², there was a dinghy problem as well, since the surge kept banging the hard dink against the newly cleaned topsides with a shuddering thud. Here I rigged the whisker pole with the spinnaker halliard and led the painter through a snatch block at the outboard end, guying the rig back so the dink was held off about 10 feet. If I hauled the bow of the dink somewhat out of the water, the rig also worked rather like a rocker stopper, and it dampened HM²'s occasional rolling.

"Friday I dealt with still more laundry, and rain that came just often enough to keep it wet! I filled HM²'s water tanks and several bottles, making four trips to the dock through the swell. It was an interesting logistical exercise. The effect of the showers I took ashore didn't last long, because I generally got soaked by spray of the waves hitting the dock on my way back to the dinghy. It felt good anyhow!

"Aboard, I replaced a leaky galley pump with one I had removed and rebuilt the previous spring. I arrived back on the boat from another raid on the town's bakery that afternoon, just as another sudden shower dampened the laundry that had dried perfectly during my absence.

"Saturday morning I got the boat squared away and departed at 9:45 for my own trip to Fatu Hiva, approximately 60 miles to the south. I was concerned when I pulled in my stern anchor since *HARMONY*'s stern line had chafed nearly through in 4 days by coral on the bottom, but my rode came in as good as new, so apparently theirs must have passed over a single coral head that did the damage. The process of getting the two anchors in took me nearly an hour and a half.

"I dislocated the little finger on my right hand in the process, as I foolishly tried to control the bow chain by hand as it went out under tension when I backed down on the stern line. The messed up digit looked dramatic, jutting off at a right angle across my palm; but it didn't hurt. After gawking at it for a second I calmly pulled it out and snapped it back into place -- and then it started to throb!"

(Ed.: his finger was swollen and continually painful when I was there, he kept hitting it on things like a sore thumb. Sure hope it's better by now; probably he should have taped it to the next finger to start with.)

"The trip down to Fatu Hiva was beautiful but slow. I had hoped to make it down before dark, but it was soon obvious that I would have to tack in the moderate southeast wind, and that I would have to make an overnight trip of it, in order to find an anchorage by daylight. I slowed down even more and tacked twice during the night, arriving and anchoring in Hana Vave at 9:50 Sunday morning. The harbor was spectacular, with steep cliffs on both sides and rock crenelations towering above the narrow valley. Strong gusts of wind came bouncing off the sheer slopes from time to time, but the water was very calm, a pleasant change from Atuona.

"Anchored just off the harbor was a small cruise ship, the *SOCIETY EXPLORER*. on her way to Tahiti from Easter Island and from the Antarctic before that. As I anchored, her captain stopped by on his way to the ship from the shore to invite me aboard for a cold drink, which I happily accepted. Also anchored astern of me was a large sailing ketch; the *SULEMA*, manned by six young Danes from Copenhagen whom he also was kind enough to invite.



The MV *Society Explorer* visits Hana Vave.

"A little later the cruise ship sent her tender over and picked us up for our visit. In the cocktail lounge aboard were a number of middle-aged tourists from the States, and a few German and British crew members. All seemed to take an interest in our cruising adventures. I was properly envious of the

comfortable ship and her interesting ports of call with on-board experts to lecture, not to mention the thought of delicious food and drink. It's the kind of exploration I'd like to try someday.

"I had just gotten back to the HM², following a pleasant hour and a half on the ship, when an outrigger canoe came by with three young men who wanted to trade pamplemousse for rope, tape cassettes, cigarettes, or rifle cartridges. Having none of the above, I offered to buy one, but they asked for 300 francs, which I thought extravagant, so they departed disappointed. I read a little and fell asleep, tired from my social activity, not to mention my overnight sailing habit.



Hana Vave, Fatu Hiva – the landing beach is at the left.

"I was up bright and early on Monday, and dinghied ashore for a hike up into the valley above the town; to find the cascade mentioned in a guidebook; and see the sights. The walking reminded me of many trips to West Virginia, the countryside looked a lot like that, except for the palm trees. A small village looked to be home for about 100 or 150 people. It extended along the banks of a largish stream, and the only road through the town paralleled it, occasionally crossing from one side to another; after the first half mile up the valley.

"The stream itself could be a mountain brook anywhere, with rounded boulders and rushing water on its way to the ocean. The town has electricity and even a half dozen street lights down near the landing. A concrete launching ramp made it easy for the people to bring their small craft in and out of the water. I used it to drag the dink out and to one side out of the way during my excursion.

"Following the road, I passed many pleasant small homes, with chickens in sight everywhere and an occasional dog or goat. Small children would gravely return a 'bonjour' to my greeting, and people seemed pleasant but a bit reserved. Gradually as I walked up the road, the town thinned out until only an occasional building was seen. The road continued for several miles past obvious sites of former villages with raised mounds where homes must have been. In this part of Polynesia, generally the higher the platform on which the house was built, the more prestigious the family.

"Occupation in these islands was much greater at one time, having numbered more than 60,000 at the time the French took them over, but has dwindled drastically in the last 130 years, due to European diseases, etc. Now there are less than 10,000 on the six inhabited islands. So the trip up the valley seemed like a trip back in time'

"The road ended rather suddenly in heavy woods at the stream, but appeared to have gone on at one time and to have been washed out. I continued, first along the stream and then along a tributary, following them past several good swimming holes to a cascade down a sheer wall, there forming a slightly larger pool covered with pollen and debris. I'm not sure this was the famous place.

"In any case I decided to take my dip in one of the nicer holes further down. It was delightfully cool on the hot day. There were few views along this way, except for occasional glimpses of peaks in gaps in the tall palm and deciduous trees. Retreating down the road, I turned up a side road which eventually led me to a high open fern covered ridge, which I climbed for some magnificent views of the valley its rock walls at the lower end, and the narrow bay, where the *HILDE M²* and the *SULEMA* could be seen swinging on their anchors.



Looking back at the harbor. *SULEMA* is barely visible.

"High on the south side of the valley I could see a crew working on a mountain road that will eventually connect Hana Vave with Omoa, the larger town on the south end of the island. The road looks like to it will be quite an engineering feat. After my exertion of climbing the ridge, I descended by another route into the valley, eventually beating my way through ferns which came above my head. When I regained the road, I looked for another swimming hole since I was hot and covered with itchy plant bits again.

"After my second cooling dip, I descended the valley and through the town to the bay where I found a note on my dinghy, inviting me over for a bowl of fish soup on the *SULEMA* with the Danes. I also noticed that the local kids had had a good time with the dink. It was sandy and had obviously been taken for a ride. Later, back out the *HM²*, I noticed that a 50 foot hank of light line was missing from the dink. It was my fault for having left it there, and the temptation was just too great for somebody, obviously line is much sought after here. It was a small price to pay for a beautiful day.

"My evening with the Danes was lovely. They brewed up a superb soup, with fresh fish, milk, butter, rice, and canned vegetables. Truly a feast, just fantastic! The six of them, four men and two women, in their twenties and thirties, are from Copenhagen. A group of about 20 of them had bought the 45 foot ferro cement ketch and outfitted it to sail around the world. Each of them pays about 30 dollars a

month regularly, plus shared actual expenses while aboard the boat, and they take turns, about 3 months at a time, changing two crew members each month. They work in Copenhagen at all kinds of jobs, school teaching, secretarial work, a doctor, nurse, etc. I thoroughly enjoyed my evening with them.

"We broke up the party about ten thirty and, returning to the HM², I pulled up my anchor and cast off for another overnight run back to Hiva Oa, shorter this time because of a fair wind. On my way, motoring out of the harbor, I had another dumb incident. The trip line from the bow anchor found its way overboard and wrapped the prop, killing the engine. I already had sails up, and had been ready to stop the engine, but now I had to get them back in and lie ahull long enough for me to go over the stern with a bosun's knife and cut away the offending line. The process took more than an hour in the dark, but I figured it was better to get things squared away then and there, in the lee of the island, before the engine might be needed again. Finally I had the sails back up and we were well and truly on our way.

'By 10:45 on Tuesday I was anchored near my former spot in Takaku Bay. I planned to go straight to town, to see the gendarme, and check out for Hana Menu that afternoon, if possible, but as I was rowing to shore, Eunice and Laura Jean from *HARMONY* rowed over and asked to borrow a hose so they could fill their tanks and wash down at the dock. I went back and it took me a while to find it. Then I proceeded on to town and picked up six loaves of bread for Eunice and four for myself. She was having a spanhetti party that evening to welcome *DELILAH* in from the Galapagos and I'm invited.

"I checked out with the qendarmes and got my green card, all set to go to Nuku Hiva via Hana Menu and Ua Poa. Back at the anchorage, I washed some clothes and wrote a few postcards before going over for the party. The bread and a few limes from Fatu Hiva were my contribution. Don and Dee on the *DELILAH*, with their two sons, had made their passage in 22 days from the Galapagos. They came via Floriana Island and had a great time. They thought it was the best in the Galapagos and I'm sorry I didn't stop there.

"There was lots of talk about everything from hemorrhoids to urinary infection (and other more mundane things like the state of the world and the granting of immunity to Oliver North). The spaghetti was delicious.

""Wednesday morning at 5:30 I was up and away from the anchorage almost immediately. There was light wind from the north, so I had to motor sail around the southwest end of Hiva Oa, finally managing to sail a bit up the southwest coast. The island was gorgeous. I saw animals grazing in meadows on the southwest end above the sheer cliffs, and was reminded of southwest England.

"Finally, as I proceeded north, I had to crank up the engine again. When I got around the northwest corner I found wind out of the northeast quite strong, at 12 to 15 knots and gusty with three foot seas. I had to tack out considerably to the north of the island, and then back in, in order to reach the anchorage at Hana Menu. The place is easy to spot, with a huge black volcanic plug ('the grosse tour') rising as a point between two halves of the bay and looking for all the world like a tower on a storm castle.

"I got in and pulled down the sails in continuing gusty winds and prepared the chain to drop anchor, but wind blowing into the anchorage area made it difficult to get into proper position to drop the hook, blowing me off each time I tried. Eventually I decided the anchorage would be untenable, and secured my ground tackle, raised sails, and headed straight for Nuku Hiva on another overnight run. I was sorry to miss this beautiful anchorage but under the conditions it would have been foolish to stay and I did

see the place from on deck. Later I was told by the crew of another yacht that anchored there a day or two later under similar conditions, that three large power boats dragged their anchors while unattended and were destroyed by heavy seas on the rocks. Definitely a risky place in such circumstances.

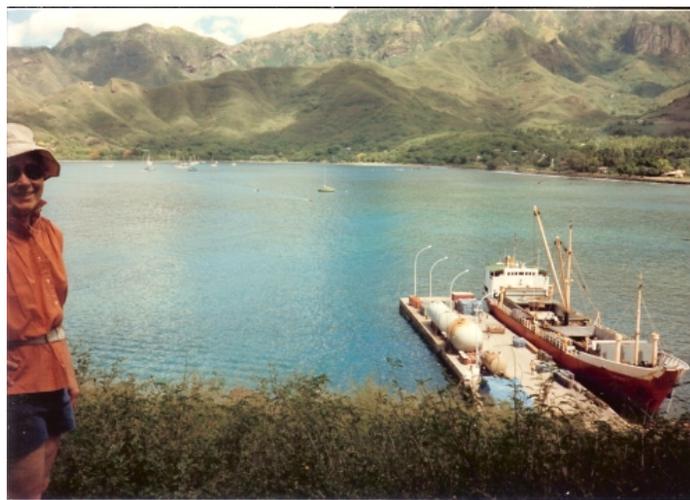
"I proceeded NNW under double reefed main and genny; got away from Hana Menu at about 1 in the afternoon and had Nuku Hiva in sight at 5:20 AM directly ahead. Then I went to wing and wing sailing downwind, paralleling the south coast, and had the anchor down in Taiohae Bay at 8:30. This is a broad, rather open bay, attractive but with not much protection should the winds blow strongly from the south. Fortunately, they almost never do. As with all anchorages in the, Marquesas, there is usually some surge, and many yachts anchor bow and stern to keep their rocking to a minimum.

"There is a large copra dock in the NE corner of the bay, but no facility for yacht dinghies like the one at Atuona on Hiva Oa. Instead, yachties have a long row ashore to a part of the beach where the surf is minimal and where they can drag the small boats up on the sand, and then a long walk into the town.

"Taiohae is the largest town in the Marquesas, the seat of the French government for the island group, and the only place with scheduled air connections to Tahiti and the rest of the world. Actually, the airstrip is on the NW corner of the island, accessible only by a rough 5 hour jeep trip, or by a 2 hour boat ride followed by a 20 minute truck trip. This was the planned meeting place for our 35th anniversary reunion, and I was waiting with considerable impatience.

"There were quite a few cruising boats at anchor. I already knew Ken Roper and his crew Richard on *HARRIER*, a thirty foot cruiser-racer, from Ken's check-ins on the radio net. Ken is another Slocum Society member.

"As soon as I had the boat secured, I made my way into town to look around and to call B to report my arrival, but found that the post office closed at 3 PM, giving me some concern since she was due to leave home the following day. I checked in with the gendarmerie and bought a few items of food and returned to the HM² for spruce up work on board pending the visit of The Admiral.



An island freighter at the quay; Taiohae, Nuku Hiva.
HM2 and other cruisers are off the far end of the long beach.

"In my hurry on the way out to the boat, I swamped the dink in a larger than normal surf, and drowned the Seagull outboard but somehow managed to save the French bread! Friday morning I returned to town the first thing and, when the post office opened at 8:30, I was able to get a quick call to B with no trouble but with a weak connection. I found her in the last stages of packing and getting ready, about an hour before she was to leave the house. I also picked up letters from both B and Hilde.

"Then I went out to Frank and Rose Corser's hotel, an institution well known to cruising boaters since Frank and Rose were cruisers themselves, having visited the island several times before deciding to open the hotel. By luck I found them both there, but in the last stages of getting ready for a trip to the mainland themselves. They were able to give me all the information I needed about the trip to the airport and, as a matter of fact, were planning to leave on the plane that was to bring B the next day. I signed their hotel book which had the names of and notes of many well known cruising people, but felt badly that I hadn't had a chance to sample their hospitality. In any case, I was to have the pleasure of being with them on the trip out to the airport the next morning.

"When I returned to the HM², Ken dropped by and invited me for supper on the *HARRIER* that evening. He provided some New Zealand steaks and some glorious baked potatoes, while I provided bread plus fruit for dessert. *AMULET*, an old friend from the Galapagos and from the ham nets, came in during the afternoon and I rowed over to say hello. They had a fine but slow trip across and were glad to be there. I was able to clue them in about the town and the anchorage.

"Saturday morning I had some last minute straightening up on the HM² and I headed for town at 10 AM to board the boat to the airport. Waiting at the boat, I met Klaus and Anitra from *ANITA*, a cruising ketch from Stockholm, which I had met in Hiva Oa. The trip up the west coast of Nuku Hiva, on the ship which apparently was a converted wartime LST, was very picturesque, but the winds were such that I was glad not to be on the HM².

"When we arrived at the cove where the truck was to meet us for the trip to the airport, we found a huge swell from the northwest was periodically sending waves right over the quay. We were concerned about going ashore and Frank Corser said he had never seen conditions like that in his years going to and from the island. Screwing up our courage, we got into the double-ended tender anyway. It had a crew of 4 or 5 and was powered by a 35 hp Mercury outboard on a wooden frame lashed and nailed to the bulwarks.



Waves breaking over the landing for the trip from the Airport, Nuku-Hiva, will give Barbara her first taste of the Marquesas.

"The rig seemed hardly seemed reassuring for the conditions, but the crew of Tahitians handled it superbly, taking us up to the dock between waves, coming alongside for just a few seconds -- enough time for several of us to scramble out and up the slippery steps with someone there to grab us. Coming in repeatedly, they threw bags of the departing passengers to people on the quay and we all took: turns catching them.

"Eventually the truck, a French Polynesian mode of transportation which is indeed a truck, with benches and a wooden cover on the back end for passengers, came down from the airport to complete our trip. The rough 20 minute trip took us up steep arroyos to the savannah-like scrub of the island plateau and around two small bays to the airport site. Along the way some semi-wild horses and a small village were seen. We arrived at the airport just minutes before the Air Tahiti flight arrived with B aboard.



The Admiral arrives in Nuku-Hiva

"Also aboard was a young Swedish couple (the brother of ANITA's skipper Klaus and his wife) with their tiny baby Sandra. We were all concerned about the trip back and the rough sea conditions, but Rose Corser was able to arrange for an islander to give the couple a ride to Taiohie in order to avoid the dangerous transfer to the boat for the baby.

"Needless to say I was overjoyed to see my mate of 35 years and on our anniversary day! B seemed rather fresh considering her long trip, and I was glad because I was able to assure her that there was more adventure in store for her. Fortunately, we were able to arrange for B's bags to be taken by Pickup truck to the Corser's hotel to avoid a probable bath at the quay."

(Ed.: Although I had lined each suitcase with plastic, things would definitely have been the worse for wear and wetting, so I was thankful this arrangement could be made; I had suffered enough getting the luggage ready!)

"Having done everything we could do under the circumstances, we boarded the truck to begin our perilous trip back to the HM²." (Ed.: Sounds like the Perils of Pauline' doesn't it? Wait 'til you see the next issue ...)

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SPECIAL THANKS are due to Rick Rhodes, our former slip-mate at Cobb Island, for making trips to suppliers and getting needed items for me to take to K, when I was rushing around trying to get everything together. The actual help was much appreciated, and Rick's offering to help meant a great deal to us, too.

TECHNOLOGICAL INFORTION DEPT. (continued)

We had two inquiries about this issue's first definition: Molas are a special form of needlework done by the Cuna Indian women in the San Blas Islands off the coast of Panama. Interesting original designs (geometric or naturalistic) are done in a sort of reverse applique technique. Several layers of brightly colored cloth are stacked one on top of another, then the designs are cut through to the various layers, turned under and hemmed down with tiny stitches. They are generally more or less square, with sleeves, a yoke and a bottom ruffle added to form a blouse. The women wear them with brightly striped wraparound Skirts. In the last few years they have become very popular for tourists to take home and use as wall hangings or pillow tops, etc.

"Wing and wing" means that the mainsail is pulled out on one side and the genny on the other. Obviously, can only be done when sailing downwind.

UTC is an abbreviation for a French expression I can't spell properly, Something like Universale Tiemps Coordinee. Means the same as GMT or Greenwich mean-time. Anyhow, it's 24 hour standard time in Greenwich, used all over the world by radio operators and various other, mostly scientific, folks who need to know exactly what time something takes place, without any possible confusion with regard to time zones and such.

El Nino is a weather phenomenon I can't describe very well for you. It happens usually every several years, and affects tides, currents, winds, etc. in the Pacific and along the whole western coast of the Americas. Although not a great deal is known or fully understood about El Nino, occasionally one can find an article in a magazine or newspaper discussing it in more detail.

Papamousse or pamplemousse (choose your spelling) is a marvelous Polynesian grapefruit that is sweet enough to eat by itself, as a most refreshing snack or as a dessert. Wish we could get them here!

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Love and au'voir to all until the next issue ...

[Main Page](#)

[Next Issue](#)