



MANCHESTER CRUISING ASSOCIATION

WORLD ARC PART I

IAN NOBLE

08 October 2009

If you bump into Ian in Sainsbury's, whatever you do, don't ask him how his World ARC trip was. Also steer him away from the exotic fruits. Lay a course a cable off the mangoes and papayas. Eschew the kiwi fruit and, at the faintest whiff of spice (or worse vanilla), crack him on the ankle with your trolley to distract him. Otherwise you're in for it.

Ian is a modest man and considerate of the feelings of others but, if invited or beguiled by suitable fruity aromas, he may tell you how it was - and you could end up frantic with envy. You only need a minute or two of Tahiti, Moorea, the Cook Islands, Bora Bora, turquoise seas, welcoming locals, £2M yachts and you could be reaching for a banana with the intent of doing him mischief. Which would be a pity because it's not his fault that he had a fabulous time.

It all started in the pub (and alcohol -consumed responsibly – was a big feature of this adventure) when he told his wife that he planned to make the best part of a circumnavigation in the World ARC on *Quasar V of Lleyn*, a Moody 54. The boat was well provided: water maker, air conditioning, generator, power winches, a 100 HP engine and just over a tonne of diesel, enough to motor 1400 miles. The position of rotating cook was available but when Ian volunteered to do all the washing-up those who had sailed with him before would have been relieved.

The World ARC is flotilla sailing on a grand scale you might say. It lasts 14 months, with 40 boats visiting 25 countries and 51 islands. The start was St Lucia in the West Indies but Ian joined in Tahiti and this talk took us as far as Darwin, Australia.

You simply don't want to know about all the exotic places they visited, all the charming locals they were feted by, the food, the drink, the parties (50% time was spent in port after all). You don't want to know about some of the other participants: the Russian millionaire and his 72-footer with electric fresh-water heads, the Frenchman with ever-changing glamorous female crews or the colonel with his boot-camp boat. You particularly don't want to know that they had but three days of uncomfortable weather in the whole trip.

In some ways the worst part was the slick way he presented it all. His casual approach set off the brilliant photographs and his two slideshow and video interludes beautifully. These latter were set to carefully-selected music. I hadn't heard *Bali Ha'i* all the way through before: there was always an off-switch handy. But somehow Oscar Hammerstein's words resonated:

“Most people live on a lonely island,
Lost in the middle of a foggy sea.”

Old Angus clearly felt this as he stumbled into the car park, loosened his threadbare MCA

tie and breathed in the Chorlton mist. He was musing on an adventure he and Elspeth had once had on the Isle of Man when he spotted Ian sauntering, still tanned, in his general direction. Quickly he fired up the Rover and drove into the night. Enough was enough.

Of course he would be back for part II on 11 March 2010

© Manchester Cruising Association 2009