

BERTHON

LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE XI



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BERTHON | LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE XI

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REVIEW OF THE MARKET

Whilst the yacht market is not yet flying, it is certainly improving and Berthon has built on the progress made last year. Currency shift dominates the brokerage market and so it is important to be nimble and in touch with the market. There is still no room for complacency as too many yachts are still not selling. The Berthon Sales Division has stepped up a gear in 2015 with additional staff and investment in marketing to increase the level of service. Sue Grant, Berthon International's MD writes. www.berthon.co.uk

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GARDENS, TEA, CAKES, AND SAILING...

Elizabeth Walker and her husband Martin are keen yachtsmen having circumnavigated the globe aboard their Oyster 435 HOOKEY. Far from swallowing the anchor, they are still cruising with HOOKEY in the Eastern Mediterranean but between trips, gardening has become a new passion for Elizabeth. Having built their extraordinary garden from scratch, the Walkers now open it for the National Gardening Scheme every year. This amazing charity offers people the chance to view around 3,800 UK gardens, many of them private, and raises a whopping £2.6m annually for charity. www.ngs.org.uk ; www.willowsgarden.co.uk

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THE AMAZING STORY OF THE COCOA FARMERS WHO SET UP THEIR OWN CHOCOLATE COMPANY

Author Sophi Tranchell MBE is MD of Divine Chocolate, the innovative Fairtrade company co-owned by a cocoa farmers' co-operative in Ghana. She is also Chair of the steering committee for Fairtrade London and successfully led the campaign to 'Make London a Fairtrade City'. In the New Year's Honours List 2008/09 Sophi was made an MBE for services to the food industry, and is on the London Food Board led by Rosie Boycott. In 2014 Divine was named as the Best Social Enterprise and a Divine bar was voted Favourite Fairtrade Product. A keen sailor she, her husband and children sailed around the Caribbean on a Van de Stadt 34, built by her husband in their garden. They now own a stunning S&S Swan 38' that they bought via Berthon this year. www.divinechocolate.com/uk

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A PHOTOGRAPHER'S STORY

Carol Parker is a yachtswoman, horsewoman and outstanding photographer as the imagery both in her article and front cover of Volume XI show very clearly. She and her husband cruise extensively aboard their FPB 64' AVATAR which has proved to be a great platform from which to take the most incredible shots. Of course AVATAR's cruising grounds in the Pacific have offered some extraordinary subject matter both above and beneath the water. www.avatarlogs.com/tag/photography

FRONT COVER

Reproduced with the kind permission of Carol Parker. The shot is of submerged corals, the breaking surf at the outer edge of a reef in the Suvarrow Atoll in the Cook Islands, and the rising sun. It was taken during a cruise from Bora Bora to Vava'u in Tonga.

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SEA URCHINS AND THE MAGIC OF PATRICK MAVROS

Author Caroline Roddis is a London-based journalist and researcher whose main interests involve getting out of London. Having previously spent most of her free time learning how to fly, she is still a fairly novice sailor and has just participated in her first race in the Solent - sadly beginners luck was nowhere to be seen... After attending the WCC Open Boat Weekend at Berthon last year she is determined to acquire a Maxi 1100 and participate in the ARC, although perhaps not in that order. She writes about Patrick Mavros jewellery, and how it is handmade in Mauritius - stunning. www.carolineroddis.com



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FALCONRY - THE SPORT OF KINGS AND THE FEATHERED FRIENDS OF AEROPLANES

An ancient art that is still practised today, it is not so well known that falcons are used for bird control at airports throughout the world, using their skill in flight to protect aircraft coming into land and at take-off. A Berthon client is very involved in bird control at airports, as well as owning a stunning Baltic 48'. He and his team fly around 30 birds... we tell the story.

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BLACK-HEADED GULLS (LARUS RIDIBUNDUS) AND THEIR EGGS

By now an essential part of the Berthon Lifestyle, Garry Eveleigh loves absolutely everything edible. He is an accomplished forager and excellent cook. Having started out as a Berthon apprentice, he is very much part of the Berthon family and we hope that you will enjoy his musings on gulls' eggs and how delicious they can be. Garry offers foraging walks for The Pig at Brockenhurst, www.thepighotel.com and Limewood Hotel, www.limewoodhotel.co.uk. Garry's new book, The Wild Cook will be out later this year.

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A SEASON OF SOUTH PACIFIC MEMORIES

Tom Partridge and Susie Plume bought ADINA their Hylas 46' via Berthon in 2012 in preparation for the adventure of a lifetime. They and ADINA have now voyaged far and they write regularly for Yachting Monthly where their tales of far away seas and extraordinary lands cannot help but capture the imagination. Their tale of the South Pacific with wonderful imagery make us all want to join them there. www.yachtadina.co.uk



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THE VOLVO SHOW ARRIVES IN NEWPORT USA

The Volvo Race was big news in Newport, Rhode Island this Spring, and the Berthon USA crew dived in with both feet, participating in the event and providing a stake boat for the start of the leg to Portugal. Alex Rudkin, son of Berthon broker Bill Rudkin, works on the programme and gives a fascinating insight into the logistics involved in building the Volvo villages that are erected whenever the Volvo show comes to town. www.berthonusa.com

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THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE SNOW BUSINESS

Darcey Crownshaw is a Berthon client and enthusiastic Windy owner. He is also very big in snow! Starting on his kitchen table, he developed a system of making fake snow from recycled paper. The business has now grown exponentially and the Snow Business now makes over 200 different types of snow, and if you have watched a film this year with some snowy scenes, the chances are that Darcey was the snow man! His article tells this great and very snowy tale. www.snowbusiness.com

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OF CLOCKS AND YACHTS

Peter Harrison is an enthusiast yachtsman who is currently campaigning his TP 52 to great effect. Starting with a Tofinou, he soon got the yachting bug. Also the European CEO of Richard Mille the legendary watch makers, he tells us about his yachting as well as about the new material that Richard Mille are using to create the RM 011 NPT watch which is the perfect yachtsmans' accessory. www.richardmille.com



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SKI VOILE INTERNATIONAL

Gavia Wilkinson-Cox has been racing her Dragon in the International Fleets for the past 13 years, competing in some 14 to 16 regattas annually and is currently ranked 12th in the World Ranking List of International Dragon Class. These epic dayboats provide extremely hot racing and the fleet is international with regattas throughout the season in some amazing locations. The first regatta of their year takes place in Juan les Pins and offers a combination of sailing and ski-ing. The perfect way to kick start the season and also tremendous fun. www.intdragon.net

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GIRL POWER AT BERTHON BUT PLEASE MIND THE (SKILLS) GAP

The Apprenticeship programme at Berthon is fundamental to the business and in an environment where as a nation we are not training enough youngsters to provide the skills that we need now and in the future, we are proud of the number of young men and women that learn their trade with us. Brian May, managing director of the Berthon Group explains the problem and showcases Tayler Lightbourn, one of our 1st year Shipwright apprentices. www.berthon.co.uk



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THE COURT OF VERDERERS

The New Forest is an ancient and very special place and is the largest area of lowland heath in Europe. Very local to Berthon's HQ it has a unique form of governance which has been in operation since 1079. Dominic May who runs Berthon Boat Company is the Official Verderer, presiding over the Verderers' Court. He writes about this extraordinary organisation and how it protects and nurtures the New Forest for both the present and the future. www.verderers.org.uk

Review of the *Market*



Sue Grant



Berthon library

Late Spring is the season when our thoughts turn to sailing and in our case, also to preparations for the Berthon Lifestyle. You are reading Volume XI of this publication, which makes those of us who have been involved from Day One feel positively pre-historic! Every year the Lifestyle develops and we look at more subjects that we hope will be of interest to our client base and to those who love our sport. We start with a list of ideas which expands every year, and then ask our clients and supporters to write for us, which they do graciously, well and with the utmost good humour. Because the publication is written this way, it is unique and you won't see any articles here that appear in any other publication. We hope that you will enjoy the range of subjects and articles as much as we have enjoyed putting this Volume XI iteration together – it has been a blast.

The new normal is now well understood as far as the yacht market is concerned and in the wider economy also, and within its parameters we have an effective grip on the game, so the business is now growing and we are gearing up for an upturn in the cycle. 2014 was a good year at Berthon, and there have been more opportunities in 2015. The vagaries of currency and political uncertainty have been the distinctive features, and whilst the political landscape is now settled in the UK, there is still plenty to worry about with presidential elections edging closer in the USA, a challenging economic landscape in Europe and much movement and change in Asia and elsewhere. Understanding the market and the real value of brokerage yachts in the market remains absolutely key. Now is not a time to be complacent as the market moves quickly and it is our job to ensure that we are giving correct, current advice to our yacht owners. All that said, the market is moving well and the sales team at Berthon is performing well, getting results and our smiles are entirely natural. ☺

Our USA office continues to sparkle in the Berthon firmament with a solid range of new yacht product from Europe from Azurre to Rustler to Contest and an experienced team who have positioned to enable us to represent larger brokerage yachts effectively in the USA at a time when truly international coverage is key. The Volvo stopover in Newport, Rhode Island was a stand-out event for our office as the crew dived into the celebrations with both feet – of which you will read more later in this Volume.

Our office in the South of France is performing well, and a move of office to Mandelieu has been a positive step, giving us a location with a dynamic port close to Nice, Monaco and St Tropez from which to extend and hone the service that we offer. **Windy Boat** Sales have outperformed many other brands in France this year, despite the awful economic data and confusion that reigns in France as a result of the current administration. We continue to extend the quality of our service in this area and the business is growing.

Berthon has always been known for the sales of brokerage **blue water cruising yachts** and we have upped our game in this sector in the last 12 months. Working with the World Cruising Club we have developed an event at our UK HQ which had its 2nd birthday last May which offers seminars and advice to those contemplating blue water cruising who are at the beginning of their adventure and who have the dream and the will to live the dream, but no yacht as yet. There are plenty of blue water yachts to see, and a plethora of blue water experts whose enthusiasm for ocean crossing is palpable and they are keen to pass on their knowledge to the delegates. The Blue Water Weekend is set to become an annual event. Our inventory of the best of mid-range blue water cruising yachts continues to develop and it is pleasing to see yachts pass through our hands a number of times and indeed to help our clients as they move from Med sailing to transatlantic and then further afield.

The UK office has increased its head count as we grow this business. We have 2 new trainee yacht brokers, in both the sail and motor side of the business. *The Berthon philosophy is one of providing good training to youngsters who in turn develop into valuable members of the team.* This policy is seen across the Berthon Group where the apprenticeship scheme continues to be one of the most important things that we do. We have also welcomed Mark Waterhouse to the team in Lymington. Known to us from his time as the Sales Director at Discovery Yachts, we continue to be active in the sales of **Discovery Yachts** as well as all other quality blue water cruising yachts in this segment.

The business of sourcing and enquiring for yachts continues to evolve very quickly and we have responded with a modern and dynamic offering via our new website. Much enhanced social media, imagery and video is another important facet to the business of presenting the yachts that we offer for sale, and we continue to invest heavily in making sure that our yachts have the visibility and promotion that they need. Of course there is no substitute for knowing the yachts that you are offering for sale which is why we continue to specialise in segments of the market so that you can be sure that not only is the information granular and accurate, but that the broker that you speak to is knowledgeable about the yacht in question. In our experience, a broad brush approach does not impress the well informed and qualified yacht purchaser.

January was an exciting month for the Sales Division where our new yachts were much in the prizes with FPB's Steve and Linda Dashew picking up the Motorboat & Yachting Special Award for their contribution to the motor yacht business. The **FPB programme** has now delivered a series of the most extraordinary motor yachts on the planet. Steve and Linda are now going cruising on their FPB 78#1 - she launches early 2016. It will be exciting to see this legendary cruising duo back on the water and please stand by for a series of fascinating blogs and articles enabling you to follow their adventures aboard the first of the FPB 78 series, which we predict will soon be seen as a ground breaking design. It is a privilege to be working with them and to be part of the creation of this special and already iconic brand. We look forward to seeing the brand continue to develop and to seeing more FPB owners realise their cruising dreams.

Also in the chocolates were Windy with the **Windy 39 Camira** picking up awards from Motor Boat & Yachting and the European Boat of the Year and her little sister the **Draco 27** also being awarded the prize for best in segment in the European Boat of the Year Awards.

At Berthon we recognise that ours is a people business and this is why we value the strength of our team so highly. With a combined number of 216 years in the business, and a close relationship between all 3 offices, we work together to ensure that we provide the best possible service to our client base. This enables us to make the specialism in market sectors work and ensures that no part of Berthon competes with another.

Outside our immediate team are the special friends of Berthon with whom we work on a daily basis and to whom go our heartfelt thanks. From the chaps and chapesses at Discovery, to Steve and Linda Dashew and Todd Rickard from FPB, the Dale Nelson crew with whom we work on all brokerage Dale Nelsons and the magnificent Windy team. Not only are they great fun to deal with, they are all the very best at what they do and we are privileged to work with them and to call them friends.

Before closing, I wanted to mention our **BERTHON COLLECTION EVENT** concurrent with the Southampton Boat Show in September, whose jolly bright catalogue you will have received with this publication. This year the Collection celebrates its 21st birthday – which is very hard to believe! A gathering of the best in terms of brokerage yachts at Berthon, if you're around over the period of the Show we hope that you will come and see us in Lymington. As usual we will be attending the plethora of Autumnal boat shows that September brings – Cannes, Southampton and Newport, so we hope to see you during the show season.

Brokerage yacht sales is at the heart of what the Sales Division at Berthon does and we invite you to take a look at the Berthon fleet where you will find everything from long legged rat race escape capsules, to explorer yachts that run on fumes to rocket ships offering pace and serious discomfort and straight line sailing yachts that are truly plug and play.

*Fair winds and good sailing
from the whole Berthon crew!*



Gardens, tea, cakes, *and sailing...*



Sue Grant



Nicola Stocken

Elizabeth Walker talks about opening her garden for the National Gardening Scheme (NGS) and how this fits with her annual sailing programme.

We have all seen those little yellow books at the nursery or garden centre, with descriptions of gardens that are open for us to go and see when their date comes up. They are practically all private gardens, where we wonder at the plant combinations, envy the seasonal display, take away ideas for our own gardens, sit in the shade (or beneath an umbrella – it is England after all) and enjoy the peace and great views. We are also assured of a jolly good cup of tea and a generous slab of cake!

There is something charmingly British about the NGS. A private garden can attract up to 200 visitors when it opens, ranging from the enthusiastic gardener, to the curious, to those for whom it is a great morning or afternoon out. For a few pounds you see a lot and enjoy English gardens at their finest, and a very warm welcome from their owners.

With around 3,800 gardens opening in England and Wales, many who visit do not appreciate the important work that the NGS does. A skinny charity with few costs and thousands of keen gardeners, it raises around £2.6m a year all of which goes to the Hospice UK, Marie Curie Cancer Support, MacMillan Cancer Support, Carers Trust, The Queen's Nursing Institute, Perennial, and a guest charity – for 2015 this is Parkinsons UK.


Elizabeth Walker is mad for gardening. She is also an accomplished yachtswoman having circumnavigated the planet with husband Martin aboard their **Oyster 435 HOOKEY** (photo above). Now based in Turkey, HOOKEY is the alter ego for Elizabeth's bold and beautiful garden which she built from scratch, and which she opens for the NGS, for whom she is also an assistant county organiser for Hampshire.

When Elizabeth and Martin built their house in a small village just outside Lymington, the garden had what might be called potential – but very little else! With a ruby wedding looming Elizabeth decided to build a large bed and fill it with warm ruby colours and so a spectacular hot bed was born.

Martin does not pretend to have green fingers, but his engineering background has come to the fore in the design and construction of much of the hard landscaping – including the large pond and bog gardens. He still does the extensive hedges, the edges and lawns. And he eventually asked the obvious question – who are you going to share all this with? A brief call to the NGS and an inspection later, and Elizabeth was signed up and their garden was bagged by the yellow book. >







The NGS is not a stuffy organisation that worries about straight edges and colour co-ordination. They are looking for 45 minutes of interest, and a garden which is a welcoming place with a welcoming owner. It is all about as Martin pointed out – sharing.....

There is a surprising number of parallels between gardening and sailing. Both are totally dependent on the weather, and coping with the unexpected applies to both. To be a successful sailor or gardener passage planning is essential. Like a yacht, Spring sees fit out for the garden too.

HOOKEY is berthed in Marmaris in Turkey. This is a great jumping off spot for the Greek Islands, and both the Aegean and Med coasts of Turkey. The best weather and lack of crowds in the Spring and Autumn suits them well, so Elizabeth and Martin sail from April to June, returning to mayhem in the garden which is tamed in time for NGS duties in July and August, leaving them free to return to HOOKEY in the autumn.

This means that Willows is a late flowering garden with crocosmias, cannas, dahlias and zinnia star. Dull and uniform it most certainly isn't – it is bold and loud - a cacophony of colour that attacks the senses when you walk into it. From the ruby bed, to the giant bamboos to the bog garden there is interest everywhere.

Amongst her fellow NGS gardeners in the area around Lymington, there is a stack of yachtsmen gardeners, and their date of opening will be dovetailed into their sailing programme....Elizabeth builds the local programme and like a voyage, the sequence of garden open days have to be carefully planned.

A yachtsman's garden does not jump out at you as full of nautical themes. However, if you look carefully you can very often spot some superior knots and tie backs that clearly once served as sheets, guys or similar.

As with anything, there is the good and the bad as far as both gardening and sailing are concerned. For Elizabeth, sailing in azure Turkish waters, flying the spinnaker on a sunlit days is as good as it gets. Sharing the garden in the height of summer when it - is full of bold, hot colours is what makes all the hard work and hours on hands and knees worth it. Extreme weeding, rather like beating into the teeth of a gale in the rain, is not on her list of favourite things! >

An important part of extended cruising is making landfall and then exploring ashore and getting under the skin of the far off place that you are visiting. Elizabeth's garden makes a passing nod to some of HOOKEY's adventures with ginger lilies from the Caribbean as well as the array of tropical plants who call this area home. Cannas from Malaya still figure amongst her favourite plants and those Gauguin-esque colours seen in Polynesia are evident in her oasis of colour and atmosphere just a hop and a skip from Berthon's HQ in the UK.

So if you find yourself at a loose end one summer weekend, do grab a yellow book and head out to an NGS garden near you. Not only will you be assured of a warm welcome, a great cup of tea and a glimpse of Britain at its best; you will also be contributing to some seriously worthwhile charities. If you spot a bowline or clove hitch securing a climber, you may well be in the home of a fellow yachtsman too...



- 1 Waterfall to lower bog
- 2 Coleus wizard mix with Dehlias
- 3 Nasturtiums
- 4 Elizabeth and Martin Walker
- 5 Hibiscus
- 6 Pond and well manicured lawn
- 7 Verbena Rigida
- 8 Nasturtium
- 9 Zinnia Envy
- 10 Coleus
- 11 Canna Striata
- 12 Sunny, dry border
- 13 Cactus Dehlia
- 14 Dahlia Kenora Sunrise





Divine[™]

70% DARK CHOCOLATE
with RASPBERRIES



The amazing story of the **cocoa farmers** who set up their own *Chocolate Company*



Kuapa farmers working together to crack open the cocoa pods and extract the beans © **Brian Moody**



Sophi Tranchell MBE



Brian Moody / Kim Naylor / Elizabeth Hudson

4,800 miles almost directly south of England, in Dadieso, Western Ghana, Mercy Zaah is making breakfast for her family in the dawn light, before setting off to spend the day on her farm.

It is October, and the heat is still fierce in the middle of the day – but fortunately Mercy's crop grows best under the shade of the rainforest canopy and so she gets some respite from the midday sun. It's a long day on the farm, weeding to keep away pests and ensure the best growth for her trees, and harvesting her ripening crop. It would be nice to bring a wind up radio along to help

while away the hours, but the sound of music rippling through the trees attracts snakes, so best avoided. Mercy cooks herself some rice and beans for lunch, and carries until late afternoon when she sets off to get home before the very sudden darkness after sunset, with her tools and cooking equipment balanced on her head. >

Here in the UK, at around the same time that Mercy is back at home in her village cooking supper on a fire pit in the yard, we're in the kitchen doing the same. We're worlds apart – but what connects us is that rather special bar of chocolate you're looking forward to later on, curled up on the sofa watching TV, with a glass of wine.

Mercy is one of over a million cocoa farmers in Ghana, West Africa – one of the biggest producers of cocoa in the world. Though the demand for chocolate around the world is growing fast, and Ghana is known for quality cocoa – the future for cocoa farmers generally looks very challenging. The trees and the farmers are getting older, while climate change, and the challenges of local economies and infrastructures, make it hard to make a viable livelihood out of cocoa farming.

What sets Mercy Zaah apart from most cocoa farmers around the world is that she is a member of the Kuapa Kokoo co-operative. Kuapa Kokoo was established on democratic principles back in 1993 with 2000 members from 22 villages, with the aim of running a professional and efficient cocoa business, with the welfare of its farmer members at its heart. The farmers were selling some of their cocoa to the Fairtrade market, but realised that, while receiving the Fairtrade premium for some of the cocoa you sell certainly helps, the real money is in chocolate (the world chocolate market is worth around ten times the value of the world cocoa market). They voted at their AGM to set up their own chocolate company so that they could share a bit of the wealth they were helping to create. The next year, 1998, the Divine Chocolate company was born, with the mission to create a leading Fairtrade chocolate brand in the UK, delivering not only Fairtrade

premium to farmers, but the biggest share in distributed profits too, and a real voice in the cocoa industry.

Fast forward 17 years and Divine – now available in the UK, USA, Canada, Europe, Australia and parts of Asia – has captured the chocolate market zeitgeist for authentic stories of provenance and real people. Helped by the success of their chocolate company, Kuapa Kokoo is now the biggest cocoa farmers' cooperative in the world – with over 80,000 members from 1257 villages across Ghana. The farmers have voted each year how to spend the Fairtrade

premium they receive for some of their cocoa, and have invested in village water boreholes, mobile clinics,

schools, and sanitation, as well as ensuring a volume-related annual bonus for each member. Owning the biggest share of Divine Chocolate has delivered additional income to invest in their business – and Divine has invested 2% of its annual income in Kuapa's most progressive initiatives – from women's empowerment programmes, to adult literacy, and exploring farming methods that deliver the biggest income. But owning a chocolate company

has had an even more fundamental impact.

Unlike the majority of cocoa farmers around the world,

Kuapa members are no longer ignorant of where their cocoa goes, and the money it makes as chocolate.

Kuapa farmers have been invited every year to the UK (and now in many countries around the world) to talk direct to consumers about their lives, but also to find out first-hand what an appetite there is for chocolate – and see with their own eyes how much their chocolate brand is loved. Kuapa farmers have spoken to audiences from

schoolchildren and church groups, to MPs, supermarket buyers, and BBCRadio1 and Worldservice listeners!



Mercy Zaah weeding



Wrapping the cocoa beans in plantain leaves for fermentation © Kim Naylor



Drying the beans in the sun on bamboo mats in the village © Kim Naylor



What sets Mercy Zaah apart from most cocoa farmers around the world is that she is a member of the Kuapra Kokoo co-operative.

Through Divine cocoa farmers are being heard and appreciated, and the company is proving here in the UK and beyond that the chocolate industry does not just have to be “business as usual” – it is possible to put people as well as profit first. However, no matter how dedicated to fairer trade and a more socially-driven business model Divine has been, the company would not be enjoying the success it has today if it wasn’t creating fabulous chocolate, and making it as available to as many chocolate lovers as possible. Even the most dedicated “conscientious” shopper doesn’t go out of their way to buy “ethics in a wrapper” when it comes to chocolate. The deliciousness of the anticipated treat comes absolutely first!

Divine has a vision that chocolate should be not just loved, but celebrated and cherished by everyone. And that includes Mercy and all the cocoa farmers around the world. If we want to carry on enjoying the treat that we love so much, we need to ensure that lovely smooth delicious brown stuff is providing a real future for farmers.



Mercy Zaah



Village water borehole © Elizabeth Hudson

A Photographer's *photographer's* Story



Carol Parker



@CBParker; cbparkerphoto.com

Ten years ago, my husband and I surprised ourselves by making an impulsive, pre-retirement decision to purchase a bluewater sailboat located in New Zealand, ideally situated for exploring the prime cruising grounds of the South Pacific. My first (as it turned out, naive) impulse was to cultivate an artistic hobby to fill the leisure time generated by our idyllic new lifestyle. Many options – oil paints, watercolors, pastels – were discarded as too messy for a vessel's tight quarters. Finally I settled on photography and embarked on not one, but two new adventures. >



Carol Parker aboard AVATAR in New Zealand

Sail into Sunset – Sea of Cortez near Cabo
San Lucas, Baja California, Mexico 2008

The best camera, as they say, is the one you have with you. Photography on a boat can be pursued with a smartphone or a pro DSLR. It is neat and clean and portable, whether on deck or ashore or even underwater. Add a computer and appropriate software for organizing and editing the images, and the onboard studio is complete.

From the deck of a cruising yacht there is a wealth of inspiration and source material that ranges from scenic vistas to wildlife to foreign cultures. These days my photo platform is a rugged aluminum **FPB64** motor yacht, supplemented by an aging much-loved inflatable kayak.

All it takes is one simple click to 'take a picture', a rectangle, destined to hang on the wall as a print or glow on a screen as a digital image or join a collection in a book. But as a photographer/artist I don't want to just record a photograph. I want to create art, to meld technical material with creative insight, elevating that rectangle to a higher plane.

The equipment and software available today are sophisticated and powerful, but to transform photography into an art form requires more than just good tools. Is a great novel the product of a good typewriter? It takes more than a good camera to produce an artistic photograph.

My finished photo-based artwork results from multiple technical choices made prior to pressing the shutter button – lens selection, exposure, depth of field, shutter speed, ISO, white balance, dynamic range and more. On the creative side I incorporate composition, light, shadow, color, texture, gesture and motion, all to play their part in capturing the raw image, the first step.

Step two is the selection process that takes place in the digital darkroom (my computer) reviewing and culling to find those select images that resonate with my imagination. The third phase is post-processing, the judicious application of a variety of digital darkroom tools – software and filters, layered and retouched by hand to manipulate the image into its final form.

In the beginning I took a cyberclass that taught me how to get the most out of my Nikon's buttons, dials and menus. Early on I learned the important camera techniques necessary to achieve the best results. But on a boat, many of those best practices are impractical. Focusing on a cavorting dolphin or a diving pelican while striving for balance on a boat navigating ocean swells is not an ideal scenario for keeping the camera steady. A shore expedition in the company of non-photographers is a source of irritation for those who don't appreciate a 20-minute pause for setting up and composing the perfectly executed shot. >



*I do a lot of shooting
from my kayak*



(above) Quiet Water –
Sables Roses, Rangiroa Atoll,
The Tuamotus, French Polynesia 2007



(above right) Feast at Dillon's Bay –
Erromango Island, Vanuatu 2010

(right) Rom Dancer with Boar's Tusk Necklace –
Fanla Village, Ambrym Island, Vanuatu 2012



(background) Misty Anchorage –
Whangaroa, New Zealand 2012



Preen – Florida Everglades 2015



As a result I've learned compromises. On a moving deck I compensate by shooting at higher shutter speeds or raising the ISO setting. To keep my balance I bend my knees and widen my stance to absorb the shock. I jam my elbows into my ribs and mash the camera viewfinder into my eye socket for additional stability. Often I fire off a burst of photos knowing that one of the bunch will by sheer luck be more crisp and clear than the others. There will be a lot of throwaways, but a few will be keepers.

I do a lot of shooting from my kayak. It's a soothing, soul-satisfying experience to rise just before dawn and glide silently in quest of a sunrise, or a seabird, or a village just starting the day. Again, the gently rocking boat and the low light of early morning limit my choices, demanding compromise.

A good image should relate a story to the viewer, not simply recreate a scene but instead share an insight into the very essence of what first captured the photographer's imagination. It may be about how the interplay of light and shadow illuminates a seascape for a brief magical moment. It may be about reflections on glassy water, or how a bird's feathers flare in flight. Perhaps it's a story of village life, a new friend, a beautiful scene, or the devastation of a storm.

But there's a second story that accompanies each image, and that is the story that belongs solely to the photographer. The travel, the gear, the camaraderie, the solitude, the discomforts, the challenges, the accomplishments – all are embedded into the making of that simple rectangle. Not just sight but also sound, touch, smell, even taste, are part of the experience. Whenever I review my work the memories come flooding back to let me relive the adventure once again.

To Breathe – Vava'u, Kingdom of Tonga 2013



As an example, this particular image tells the viewer the story of a mother whale helping her new calf breathe in clear blue tropical water. But for me it contains the hidden short story of how she first swam away from me, then changed her mind and returned to within touching distance of her own volition, lingering passively in the water next to me, eye to eye, observing me as I observed her, while her baby slept.

An even lengthier version of that narrative begins with a 6,000 mile journey to the tropical kingdom where the humpbacks congregate. It includes my history of previous whale-watching expeditions led by professionals, where I learned whale behavior and how to observe them in the water safely and respectfully. It is colored by a Sunday morning sail in search of a cooperative whale, and the frisson of excitement as I donned snorkel gear, grabbed the underwater camera, and slid into the water from off the stern of the boat.

Each photo, that deceptively simple click, is embedded with its own stories, one for the viewing public and one for me alone. To produce them with forethought, investing time and energy into making them the best they can be, is to imbue them even more deeply into my psyche.



The Lobster's Garden – Wyagg, Raja Ampat 2013

Sunrise Flight – At Sea, Solomon Islands 2012



*But there's a second story that
accompanies each image, and that is the
story that belongs solely to the photographer*



Sea Urchin Pendant
in Gold

Sea Urchin Dangle Earrings
in Gold



Sea Urchin Starfish Cufflinks
in Gold



Sea Urchin Starfish Cufflinks
Oxidised





SEA URCHINS

and the magic of **Patrick Mavros**

 **Caroline Roddis**

 www.patrickmavros.com

African jeweller Patrick Mavros is famed for its pieces depicting the sorts of creatures you might see on safari. Now, however, they've turned their hand to something more familiar to those who like their safaris a bit more nautical.

Just like his creations, Patrick Mavros' brand is small but exquisitely formed. The company, based in his native Zimbabwe, is treasured by those in the know for its intricate jewellery, homewares and sculpture, all of which capture the natural world in shimmering silver. It was founded almost by accident: in 1978 Mavros, who was a baker at the time, carved his new wife a pair of rose petal earrings that proved to be immensely popular with their friends and neighbours. Soon he was making more from selling earrings than he was from bread, and one of Africa's finest artisan businesses was born.

As the company grew Mavros adopted the art of lost wax casting to keep up with demand. This ancient technique involves creating a unique wax carving – be that of crocodile cufflinks, a Ndoro pendant, or an intricate giraffe centrepiece – and covering it in liquid rubber. Once this rubber sets, it is carefully cut away to leave a perfect reverse copy of the piece, which is then injected with molten wax to create a flawless copy of the original. Next, this cooled wax copy is coated in plaster of Paris and fired, a process that sets the plaster mould and melts the now redundant wax away through a tiny aperture. >

HANDMADE IN MAURITIUS, THESE SEA URCHIN EARRINGS, NECKLACES, BANGLES, RINGS, CUFFLINKS, CANDLEHOLDERS AND PAPERWEIGHTS ARE DESIGNED TO REFLECT THE DELICATE BEAUTY THAT LIES BENEATH THE OCEAN'S SURFACE.



Sea Urchin Cufflinks
3 colour variations

Finally, the mould is ready to be filled with molten metal, cooled, and then broken open to reveal the piece, which will then be checked and polished, as well as set with gemstones where necessary. Patrick Mavros' collections are only made in silver or gold, both of which are mined in his native country, and each piece is signed by a Mavros hand.

Although they now have premises in Mauritius, Nairobi and London as well as Zimbabwe, not to mention an international following, Patrick Mavros remains a family-run company. The Mauritius outpost, for example, is run by Mavros' second-eldest son Forbes and his wife Kate, who have recently made a spectacular addition to the company's range with their Sea Urchin Collection. Handmade in Mauritius, these sea urchin earrings, necklaces, bangles, rings, cufflinks, candleholders and paperweights are designed to reflect the delicate beauty that lies beneath the ocean's surface.



Although the pieces still use the traditional method of lost wax casting, Forbes explains that the starting point comes directly from nature itself. "When we walk along our beach in Poste Lafayette" he says "we scour the tideline for these precious shells that wash ashore, especially after tropical storms. Lost wax casting allows us to replicate the exact form of the sea urchin in sterling silver or 18ct gold. The shell of the sea urchin, known as a 'cast' or 'test', is the remnant that the living creature leaves behind. All of the pieces in the Sea Urchin Collection are moulded from real casts that we have collected."

It may sound simple, but there is much more to the process than simply replicating the form of the cast. "A mould is made of the urchin" elaborates Forbes, "then we painstakingly refine the original waxes to create a perfect model for the prototype. We work together to establish each element of the design, from bezels and ring shanks to dimensions, and finally we hand-select every stone, pearl and diamond." Every element of the surrounding jewellery is also handmade, even the wire for the Sea Urchin Cuff bangle, which is created by pouring molten sterling silver into an ingot, then drawing this through a 5mm oval plate.

ALL OF THE PIECES IN THE SEA URCHIN COLLECTION ARE MOULDED FROM REAL CASTS THAT WE HAVE COLLECTED.

CHRYSOPRASE



BLUE TOPAZ



PINK CORAL



PEARL

Sea Urchin Starfish Cufflinks with Gold
4 colour variations

All of this work is done in-house at their Mauritius premises, from alloying the 18 carat gold to create the distinctive Patrick Mavros yellow gold colour, to spring-loading their distinctive Sea Urchin cufflinks. "Every piece passes through multiple skilled hands," he adds, "from our mould makers, wax craftsmen, metalsmiths, stone setters and polishers, then is rigorously inspected before leaving the Patrick Mavros Mauritius atelier."

As with every piece made by the company, it is the sea urchin collection's trueness to nature that makes the pieces so stunning. To truly replicate the natural world, great care is taken to ensure that every piece is unique. "The Sea Urchin Starfish Rings have been textured by hammering or planishing, giving each ring a unique and natural character", says Kate. Although the jewellery items are exquisite, the couple's favourite pieces from their collection are actually the Sea Urchin Tea Light Holders, which can be set with either Chrysoprase or Turquoise.

Although the company is primarily known for its land-based collections, these pieces suggest it will quickly gain a following from ocean-lovers and sailors. The collection's success is perhaps because, as Forbes claims, the underlying craftsmanship that made Patrick Mavros so highly regarded can be transferred to any medium. "Having grown up in the African bush, our adaptation to the surrounding environment comes naturally; this collection is a culmination of months researching these fascinating creatures from our oceanic realm. Selecting the stones for this collection was very important in expressing the incredible colours of the Indian Ocean."

Their understanding of the oceanic realm is unsurprising because Forbes and Kate have a clear affinity with the sea and with sailing. "We are adventurers and drawn to exotic travel. Our favourite event in Mauritius each year is the annual pirogue regatta. This takes place on our beach and draws a wonderfully festive crowd. The Creole pirogue of Mauritius takes ancestry from the fine Swahili dhows that have navigated the Indian Ocean for hundreds of years."

The couple are keen to continue using their passion for sand and sea to create unique silver pieces in the renowned Patrick Mavros style. "Our latest one of a kind pieces use fossilized sand dollars, Bunga agate (which is fossilized coral from the coastal mountains of Borneo) among other treasures, as we are constantly inspired by these unique materials" explains Kate. "We have just completed a sculpture of a family of hawksbill sea turtles swimming amongst a staghorn coral in sterling silver. We are constantly creating new and exciting projects inspired by our oceanic surrounding and the myriad of incredible marine creatures yet to be explored."



IN THIS WAY THE BIRD
SPENDS MORE TIME IN
THE AIR AND IS MORE
EFFECTIVE IN CLEARING
THE PATH OF THE
ONCOMING AIRCRAFT



FALCONRY

THE SPORT OF KINGS AND THE FEATHERED FRIENDS OF AEROPLANES



Sue Grant



BAE Systems

Falconry has been around for really quite some time. This extraordinary sport was in existence BC and evidence of its importance in early Egyptian civilisation can be seen extensively in the hieroglyphics that have been preserved for posterity in the pyramids and elsewhere.

It was probably at its height in terms of profile in the Middle Ages. The aim of the game is the beauty and purity of the flight. Much in the same way that hunting and fishing are about the working of the hounds, or the correct fly and the skill in the cast, in falconry, the taking of the bird by the falcon is not the point of the sport, but is an inevitable by-product of it.

In those days, the Falconer was the David Beckham of the sporting world although they were probably treated with rather more respect. Unlike today, the Falcons were captured from the wild by the Falconer and after around a year engaged in the sport, were released to the wild again. These men and their skill have made a lasting impact on the English language and here are a few everyday terms with which you will be familiar, and which show how much this sport was an essential part of the fabric of life in those times –

HOODWINKED – a Falcon wears a hood on the way to a falconry event and will remain quite quiet until this is removed

MANNING UP – a Falconer will spend around a month with a new bird so that they both get to know each other. They will be together 24/7 so that there is a close bond between man and bird

CADGE – the wooden structure that a number of birds will be secured to during an event. The Cadger was normally carried by a retired falconer – Old Codger...you could say that the falcon would cadge a lift...

FED UP – once a Falcon has killed, the bird eats his prey. If allowed to eat his fill, he will be fed up – at this stage he won't bother to fly, so a Falconer will stop him feeding if he wants him to fly again.

There are many of these words, but these few examples demonstrate the point. >

In the days of Henry VIII, the sport was conducted in much the same way as it is today. The King together with his Falconer and those of his guests would sally forth together with a large number of beaters to put up the prey. They would find a suitable spot, and the Gadge would be set down. The birds would be flown one at a time. The selected falcon would be released and would fly high when the beaters had done their job, and would then come in for the kill. The beauty of the soaring and the swoop down on the prey was the stuff of myth. Once on the ground with its prey, the bird would be recovered and flown again if not fed up. As falcons like to pluck their prey before eating, those dispatched to find them had a little time.

Falconry is still a respected and well supported sport and birds are now bred for the sport rather than being captured from the wild.

However, these noble birds also play a role in the 21st century where they protect our feeble attempts to emulate their skill in the air. Used extensively in countries like Spain, in the UK they are working to protect military aircraft across the country. First used for bird control in the 1940s, falconers training falcons for bird control were the only people allowed to take falcons from the wild.

It is a well-known fact that aircraft are vulnerable to birds which fly into their engines and they are most at risk at take-off and landing. A seagull flying into an aircraft engine for example, can cause significant damage and as each component has to be inspected after each bird strike it makes it a costly business.

There are many weapons in the bird control manager's armoury from noise, to infra-red to lights. However, the advantage of a falcon is that when the general bird population sees a falcon soaring, the one thing that they have in common is that they are very, very afraid. A falcon can clear an area of around a square mile making the take-off and landing of a scheduled flight much safer particularly when an airport is close to an area where the surrounding countryside is home to wildlife.

Bird control falconry lacks some glamour, and the technique is somewhat different. The falcon is trained to soar and not to make the kill. In this way the bird spends more time in the air and is more effective in clearing the path of the oncoming aircraft. This makes for a different technique and the need for an astonishing bond between man and bird. The bird has to come to earth to take feed from his falconer's hand rather than to make a kill. This is not a process that a falcon will tolerate long term, so bird control falcons will after a period take prey from the sky, at which time they are retired to begin a new life with a falconer, where they are prized as superbly trained birds and have a happy future.

I came across this incredible story from a client who is not only an accomplished falconer but also an enthusiastic sailor. He says that there are parallels but that his Baltic is generally rather less difficult to manage. If you fly out of the UK, you may well have been protected by his staff of bird control experts who use many forms of bird control including of course falcons. He has 7 falconers on his staff and they fly 30 birds. Although he flies a desk these days, his knowledge of this skill and his total respect for these most noble birds will ensure that they continue to protect us for many years to come.



THE



WILD COOK:

BLACK-HEADED GULLS (LARUS RIDIBUNDUS) and their eggs



Garry Eveleigh



Matt Dunkinson

It has been said that the late Reginald J. Mitchell, legendary aeronautical designer, first conceived the idea for his world famous “Spitfire” while watching the manoeuvring, gliding and hovering display of a flock of seagulls. I love to watch these agile birds on the wing and occasionally refer to them as the “Spitfire birds”. >



(above) Black-headed gulls in flight

(below) Black-headed gull's eggs

This long winged, agile small gull has under parts as white as driven snow with the bird's back and upper parts of the wings a pale battleship grey. The tips of the primary feathers on the wing ends are jet black and the leading edge of the forewing feathers shaped in a blaze of white. The black head of this streamlined, dainty gull is, in fact, not black at all but a rich, dark chocolate brown and the heads of these tenacious and successful sea birds only change to this colour as part of the adult bird's breeding plumage during early spring.

The gull's Latin name *Ridibundus* means "laughing" and particularly at the onset of each mating season it is easy to see how they acquired that name. The male and female birds perform a noisy squawking mating ritual display with heads bowed low and then held high, wings folded but slightly drooped and tail feathers fanned out wide as the happy couple waddle around each other, beak to beak, squealing and cackling at the very top of their voices.

Nest building begins in earnest in early April and by the middle of the month a few of the most mature gulls are beginning to lay eggs. Unfortunately for these birds, this is usually a complete waste of time and effort, as the large spring equinox tides will flood their nesting grounds that are situated way out on the salt grass marshes. This catastrophe can be made far worse if these spring tides coincide with a gale; wind can wreak havoc amongst the colonies causing every nest and egg to be washed away. However, as soon as these highest tides subside, the tenacious Black-headed gulls simply begin building new nests all over again, with the highest ground becoming even more densely populated after each spring tide disaster.

Collecting gull's eggs has gone on for generations and has shown no adverse effects on the numbers of Black-headed gulls; there is something in the region of twenty thousand pairs of nesting gulls within the estuaries located throughout the Solent waters and their success continues even though the gulls face constant threats from all of the elements that Mother Nature can throw at them.

The most noticeable of these threats being the natural erosion of their nesting grounds way out on the salt grass marshes on the fringes of the Solent.

The collecting of gull's eggs is only permitted with a strictly regulated licence. These licenses are only issued to just a handful of "real" locals and will be handed down through generations. Each licence holder is permitted to gather only a stipulated number of eggs and must record on a daily log sheet the number of eggs collected and the particular area of the salt grass marshes from where the eggs were gathered.

The "eggin season" as it is affectionately known locally, opens on April 15th but only a few eggs will be gathered before the end of this month; the final day for collecting this springtime delicacy is May 15th. During the short hectic season the licence holders have to be off the salt grass marshes by 9:00am from Monday to Friday and 11:00am at the weekends.



The rugged, weather-beaten egg collectors know the salt grass marshes like the backs of their hands, which is essential as the boggy marshes are a maze of water filled creeks and dangerously soft, muddy crevices. Venturing out onto the marshes has to be treated with the similar caution as finding your way through a minefield; in some areas any complete novice could very easily find themselves up to their waste in deep, sloppy, black, stinking mud.

Gathering the eggs begins as early as 5:00am and has to be done swiftly and efficiently to make certain the lively colonies are not disturbed for too long. The gull's eggs are a thing of beauty with no two eggs looking the same, each individual bird attempting to mimic its surroundings. The golf ball sized egg-shells are pale green to dark olive brown, with varying sized flecks of black, brown, green and grey making each egg unique and extremely well camouflaged in an attempt to hide the freshly laid eggs from the many greedy predators such as Great Black-backed gulls, Crows, Ravens and even the occasional Heron, not forgetting the sly old Fox who will gladly swim out to the nesting grounds to raid this annual feast.

The collecting of gull's eggs under licence is, in my view, absolutely no different to collecting fresh eggs from your hen-house chickens. The gulls, like poultry birds, will continue to lay a beautifully camouflaged egg each and every day while the eggs are taken through the short eggging season. Fortunately for the gulls, the licensed egg collecting comes to a halt on May 15th and the noisy gulls will then fill each nest with three or four eggs in as many days and begin the incubation period, this can take anything between twenty to twenty six days. The salt grass marshes then become an enormous creche, with quite literally thousands of mottled, light brown, very hungry chicks. The Black-headed gull chicks grow at an incredible rate and the fluffy warm down in which they hatch from the egg very soon turns to feathers. The young gulls can take to the wing within thirty five to forty days after hatching.

By February in the following year, the chicks that survive their first winter will begin the transformation, develop the chocolate brown head, find a mate and join the noisy squawking colonies for yet another successful breeding season, and once again the licensed "egggers" will collect the spring time delicacy for the four weeks of the permitted season.

In bygone years, the freshly gathered gull's eggs were used to barter anything from meat from your local butcher to even a pint or two at your local ale house, or the eggs were simply eaten at any mealtime, omelettes, scrambled or fried by the half dozen. Nowadays though, with any such barter system long since gone, most of the eggs are boxed up in flat trays, holding three dozen eggs per tray and are usually on their way to the markets in London well before 9:00am, to ensure the best prices are achieved for this short, spring seasonal delicacy. Top London restaurants and Gentlemen's clubs will have the gull's eggs on their menus served gently boiled for 6/7 minutes with green salad garnish, along with freshly made mayonnaise and celery salt.

So, if you have never tasted the exquisite, creamy, richness of this short spring season gull's egg delicacy, then put them on your wish list of things to do/eat before you die - **they really are that deliciously good, believe me!!!** >



(above) Gull's eggs being shelled

(below) Soft boiled gull's eggs
in a wild salad



RECIPES

Gull's Eggs

The eggs of the Black-headed gull are quite fragile, so any mud, debris or guano should only be carefully wiped off with a damp cloth, then bring a large pan of water up to a slow simmering boil, the shells being extremely thin can easily crack, so use a large slotted or perforated spoon and very carefully lower the eggs into the simmering hot water for seven minutes maximum, remove the eggs and refresh in very cold water. With the shells removed the albumen or white of the egg is in fact semitransparent with almost a hint of blue and the yolk, which is a startling flame orange, should be cooked through with the very centre being almost gooey, but not runny.

Celery Salt

I like my celery salt to really taste of celery, so take a whole crown of delicious green celery including the leaves, wash and then dry thoroughly, dice the whole plant in to quite small pieces then spread them on to the racking trays of a dehydrator, set at forty degrees and dry for three hours. The small diced pieces of fresh celery will dehydrate and dry up to almost nothing, the moisture removed leaves an intense flavour of celery. Simply place the dried celery into a pestle add some good quality rock sea salt and using the mortar grind the contents to your desired consistency - I like mine a bit chunky.

If you do not have a dehydrator the same effect can be achieved by spreading the diced celery on a flat baking tray, place in the oven and bake at forty or fifty degrees centigrade until the celery is bone dry.

Mayonnaise

Mayonnaise is an emulsion, which is simply a mixture of two different liquids that really don't want to combine, but it is so easy to make and far superior to that gloop that comes in a jar, try it!

Whisk two egg yolks with a teaspoon of white wine vinegar, then, while continually whisking gradually add small splashes of olive oil, as the mixture begins to thicken add a continuous fine drizzle of 250ml of olive oil, adding the oil too quickly at this stage will cause your mixture to separate, keep whisking furiously until your mayo is the perfect consistency, finally add the juice from half a lemon and a tablespoon of Dijon mustard, whisk a little more, season to taste and store in the fridge. If you don't need the exercise - use a food processor!!



(above) Homemade celery salt in pestle

(opposite) Garry collecting gull's eggs



A season of **South Pacific** *memories*

  **Tom Partridge**

As Susie and I guided ADINA, our Hylas 46, through the towering gates of the Miraflores Lock at the end of the Panama Canal emotions were running high.

Less than a year after leaving Hamble in England, and following a few months shake-out in the Mediterranean and Christmas in the Caribbean, here we were heading for the Bridge of Americas, about to embark on our South Pacific adventure.

We spent a couple of days in Panama City enjoying its vibrancy and culture before heading to the calm of the nearby Las Perlas islands. Here we made final preparations for our passage to the Galapagos Islands during which we'd cross the equator for the first time.

Ten days of light-wind sailing later we arrived in San Cristobal just as the sun was setting, welcomed by the sight of numerous paired tips gliding through the water – not sharks but a

shoal of manta rays. Formalities are strict in this environmentally sensitive area and costs high so many share the experience with friends and family, as did we. Being anchored on your yacht is one of the best ways to see the wildlife; sea lions swim by poking their heads up inviting you to play, pelicans sit on top of your pulpit looking for fish, small Galapagos penguins dart by, a ripple on the surface reveals a turtle. Ashore you can spot the famous blue-footed boobies doing their unusual courtship dance on the rocks or pre-historic looking marine iguanas basking in the sun.

Dragging ourselves away for the longest voyage of our counter-clockwise circumnavigation, three thousand nautical miles west took us to French Polynesia. While all landfalls are special, landfall >



Wildlife abounds in the anchorage at Isabella Island, Galapagos



Tom Partridge and Susie Plume



Sea lions spin and dive, enticing you in to swim with them in the Galapagos Islands



Blue-footed boobies entertain with their mating dance in the Galapagos Islands



Ua Pou in the Marquesas - another striking backdrop for anchoring

in the Marquesas has to be the most breath-taking of all; majestic hills and emerald green peaks soar into the sky, a mixture of coastal palm trees and thick pine forest higher up. As we explored these verdant isles we relished in the abundance of fresh fruit - bananas, papayas, limes and the unique grapefruit-like pamplemousse. We marvelled at big tattooed Marquesan men beating drums and performing intimidating dances, pounding their chests and legs, gaining our immediate respect.

A four day sail brought us to the fabled Tuamotus Islands, seventy-eight low-lying coral atolls scattered over a thousand miles. Known as the 'Dangerous Archipelago', sailors historically steered well clear but modern day GPS has made the atolls far more accessible. Tides rip in the lagoon entrances requiring your utmost concentration, often leaving the heart a-thumping. Here, life is simple; days are spent enjoying dives in the shark-rich passes, evenings around beach fires meeting up with fellow cruisers for a potluck dinner. Few cruisers leave the Tuamotus without a purchase or two of some of the world's most treasured black pearls; we were no exception, Susie timing her birthday shopping to perfection!

Carrying on through French Polynesia, we arrived in the Society Islands for the annual Heiva festival in July. With celebrations throughout the islands, the biggest are held in Tahiti. We were soon absorbed by outrigger races, coconut tree-climbing and spear throwing but for us the real attraction was the dancing. Troupes of up to two hundred women and men wriggle and stomp away in beautiful hand-made island costumes competing for the top prize while elders sing traditional island songs.

The Society Islands offer weeks of leisurely sailing in protected lagoons around Moorea, Huahini, Raiatea and Bora Bora before a decision needs to be made on your route to Tonga. North to the famed Suwarrow, south to Raratonga or straight through the middle with a chance to stop at Palmerston, Niue and Beveridge Reef, a decision that is dictated by weather. We sailed straight across, encountering the notorious South Pacific Convergence Zone, dodging squalls before a stop on the coral island of Niue exploring its many sea tracks and hidden inlets.

With celebrations throughout the islands, the biggest are held in Tahiti.



The Marquesan dancers gained our immediate respect, competing here at the Heiva festival in Papeete, Tahiti



The Tuamotus are famed for their black pearls - many cruisers indulge in a purchase or two!



Male spear throwers taking aim at the Heiva Festival in Papeete, Tahiti



Once in a lifetime, swimming with humpback whales in Tonga - this is the calf!



The stunning uninhabited island of Kelelesia, Ha'apai Islands, Tonga



In Fiji you always need to keep a lookout for coral

The Vava'u island group in north Tonga provides an opportunity to relax and catch up with friends. There are numerous beautiful islands to explore with easy sailing and good anchorages but the real drawcard is that this is one of the few places in the world where you can swim with magnificent huge humpback whales come August and September.

Always keen to explore and get off the beaten-track, we left the masses and headed south to the seldom visited unspoilt Ha'apai islands. Here we found our paradise for two weeks, relaxing into a happy rhythm – treading the white beaches, snorkelling, and collecting shells.

With the end of the season looming, Fiji was calling with its infectious greeting of "Bula! Bula!" You quickly understand why many elect to spend an entire season exploring this vast archipelago. In the east we enjoyed the more traditional lifestyle, being absorbed into village life and learning the time-honoured art of sevusevu - the presentation of a gift of kava roots to the village chief. We had a quick pit-stop in the west, visiting the famed Musket Cove as a base from which to explore the popular Yasawa Islands with crystal clear waters and vibrant reef. >



Serene sea snakes swim in front of us in Niue



Snorkelling with a Black Tip Reef Shark, South Fakarava, Tuamotus, French Polynesia

Soon we were on our final passage to Vanuatu, a choppy one for us, where we had booked Adina in to a boatyard in Port Vila for the upcoming cyclone season. Vanuatu is a destination for those seeking adventure; a green and fertile country with people who claim to be the happiest on the planet. 'Kastom' (custom) remains strong with each island embracing its own traditions and where chiefs still play an integral part of life. For us the fun of trading with locals and sharing kai-kai (food) were real highlights.

As our season drew to a close we could not help but reminisce about our incredible year which left us rich with lifetime memories. The South Pacific is a truly unique sailing destination; landscapes vary dramatically, individual country customs and cultures are different, but one thing remains throughout – the friendly welcome you are assured wherever you go.



We enjoyed some good and fast trade wind sailing around the Tuamotus Islands



Traditional Rhom Dancing is a must-see when visiting Ambrym in Vanuatu

TOP TIPS FOR SAILING in the South Pacific...

- ✓ You will need to be self-reliant and capable of fixing everything and anything – know your yacht!
- ✓ Ensure you have ample spare parts for all critical components you couldn't live without
- ✓ Speak to the manufacturers for advice, carry their contact details and build a relationship before you leave
- ✓ Embrace local food but stock up on staples and favourites in Panama
- ✓ Subscribe to Bob McDavitt's weekly weather Blog – email bob@metbob.com
- ✓ Download satellite images in advance to aid navigation, particularly in areas with reef and tricky lagoon entrances
- ✓ Use an SSB radio to join a radio net and meet fellow cruisers – nets vary by season, just ask around
- ✓ Consult www.noonsite.com as a great source for up-to-date country-specific information, especially regarding regulations
- ✓ Get a boat card to help staying in contact with friends you make and locals you meet
- ✓ Make sure your snorkelling and diving equipment is ready for a lot of use
- ✓ Take your time and enjoy it!

South Pacific Calendar

Sailing Season:

March to end of November

July:

Heiva Festival, French Polynesia

August and September:

Swimming with humpback whales,
Niue and Tonga

September:

Fiji Musket Cove Regatta

Throughout:

Kastom dancing in Vanuatu



Susie leaving nothing but footprints in the beautiful Ha'apai Islands, Tonga

THE VOLVO SHOW

ARRIVES IN NEWPORT USA



Alex Rudkin



Marc Bow / Juerg Kauffman / Corinna Halloran



A business to business and sponsor relationship masked by a competitive 9 month sailing race. The Volvo Ocean Race is a year long regatta sailing to ports in 11 countries, communicating in 9 languages, and ultimately creating new fans for the race, and their lead sponsor, Volvo Cars and Volvo Group.

The stopover is a cohesive partnership between the port organizing authority and Volvo Ocean Race. In Newport, Sail Newport, a non-profit public sailing center, organised the only North American stopover for this rendition of the race. Sail Newport's focus was to provide access to the water and sailing to the general public at reasonable cost. Hosting a high profile event like the Volvo gave Sail Newport the platform to give access to the water.

A Race Village is no small feat. A well organised village takes 2 years to plan and execute. Sure, Volvo Ocean Race brings 100 shipping containers full of their experience elements, pavilions, and team bases, but all the local infrastructure must be organized and booked in advance. It's the little things that are the most important, like port-a-jons and internet.

An army is needed to move a mountain like this. In Newport's case, it started with Hurricane Pam in Auckland. A tropical system that threatened both the Volvo Ocean 65's departures and the Maersk Container Ship en-route to Newport. Any more than a couple days delay for the ship would have stopped Newport making the critical Village Opening. In no time the containers arrived in Pennsylvania and were trucked to Newport. On April 20th the incredible task of getting the village put together started for a May 5th opening. Operationally, containers needed to be marked out and leveled as the cranes lowered them. As many as 35 forty foot containers created the huge Volvo Pavilion, with just as many for SCA's Pavilion.

Stopovers not only give crews some much needed R&R, but also give the sponsors an excellent hospitality venue for their VIPs. When SCA arrives in town, you know it. The Village, town and city is flooded with a sea of Magenta and Purple. Always remember, it's not pink ... it's MAGENTA. Not too many people knew of SCA or its subsidiary companies before this race. SCA stands for Svenska Cellulosa Aktiebolaget, tell an America to pronounce that 10 times fast! Their American brand is Tork and people still don't fully know what that is. But tell them that they make the napkins in Dunkin' Donuts, then they are connecting a product with a known brand. That's what builds brand recognition, and in turn, sales.

With an overall attendance to the Race Village in Newport of around 125,000 people, Volvo Ocean Race, Volvo Cars, Volvo Group, and even SCA all consider this stopover a great success for the American Market.

Another logistical puzzle piece is that due to the short legs between the stopovers in Europe, the containers could not meet the Race Village opening on June 9th. Because of this, most of the activations in the village are locally hired. The same experience elements like the Cross Section and Another Day at the Office Dome were present, but the structures holding these were local. More local organisation allows for a different feel from previous stopovers.

Once the detail is organized, it turns into a sailing race. Amazing emotion, pride, and hard work go into the village and events. When you see an arrival at 03:30 and how many fans turn out to cheer, everything you've worked for is worth it. It may be a business to business and sponsor relationship that is masked by a sailing race. Yet, in the end, it IS a sailing race.

Sail Newport and the Newport sailing community blew all other North American stopovers "out of the water". With over 700 volunteers on land and on the water with their stake and marshall boats, it was amazing to see how it all pulled together, and everyone had a blast! When the first boats arrived in the wee hours, there were boats on the water to meet them, and around 3,000 people on the docks cheering VOLVO!

The boat crews couldn't believe it – every restaurant was decorated, crew gear was everywhere, and anywhere they went, everyone knew and wanted to talk about the race. We also had the first of Spring, no rain, and the final race was in 75 degrees, 15-20 knots of breeze, and probably 150,000 people lining the shores of Newport and Jamestown. Berthon USA was in the midst of it all, aboard their Azzurre 46, one of the stake boats, which marks the boundary of the course. There was a heated moment when the race boats went under the Newport Bridge, and then veered off into the spectator fleet – talk about trying to get out of the way! Each boat also had a jumper or 2 aboard – which means whoever that person was, as the boat passed by Castle Hill, they jumped off the back of the boat – either that or next stop Portugal! It was an incredible sight to see the spectator fleet, which was released after the boats sailed under the bridge, following them out of the Bay. There were moths, jet skis and pretty much anything that could float!



There's no business like *Snow Business*



Sue Grant



SnowCel

Working from his kitchen table and relying on nothing more than “ingenuity and excellent contacts”, Darcey Crownshaw set about making bags of high quality fake snow from recycled paper for a friend who worked on movie special effects.

SnowCel, which Darcey created in 1983, “looked like snow, it could be sprayed to settle naturally on trees and buildings and it even made good tyre tracks and footprints - just like the real thing.”

During the next couple of years, eco-friendly SnowCel was used to great effect in several blockbuster films. Darcey's friend told him that he would ‘make a fortune’ if he produced SnowCel on a full-time basis. “So, three years after inventing the product, I did just that. But then, after turning over just £958 in year four, it didn't seem such a good idea after all. It actually took about 10 years to make a profit!”

In the early '80s, Darcey's rivals made fake snow from salts, urea-formaldehyde, polystyrene, mica, marble dust or high expansion foam. A major turning point in his fortunes came after he contacted the BBC. “They wanted an all-risk assessment of my snow before using it. After the assessment had been completed, the guy involved

turned to me and remarked, ‘you know what, I am going to ban urea-formaldehyde’.

“Anyone using snow on stage made from urea-formaldehyde had to leave the doors open for 48 hours afterwards to allow time for it vent. The risk assessor banned urea-formaldehyde immediately. Suddenly all my rivals couldn't work for the BBC. I was in!”

For a number of years, Darcey had only one product - SnowCel. When he received a phone call asking if he could make snow for *The Muppet Christmas Carol*, he realised he would have to produce finer flakes.

“The trouble was, as I soon discovered, snow made from small flakes of paper doesn't behave in the same way as snow made from large flakes.” After much research, Darcey cracked the problem and produced the extremely fine snow required – a product called Half-Size SnowCel. Still smaller flakes were needed for the *Thomas The Tank Engine* TV series, so PowderFrost was developed.

(left) Mercedes shoot

(right) Carved Ice Gel Sculpture

(below) The Holiday



Snow Business has buried people in blocks of ice, made falling snow that disappears on contact, sculpted non-melting ice bars and frosted whole castles.

Today, 31 years after inventing SnowCel, Darcey is owner and managing director of the world's leading maker of artificial snow and winter effects. Working from a 1730s converted watermill on a six-acre site near Stroud in Gloucester, England, Snow Business International Ltd makes more than 200 different kinds of artificial snow, along with ice and frost materials.

"Of these, around 30 products are used all the time," he said. "The rest are more specialised products, such as the very large paper flakes we use for Shakespearean plays. "We've artificial snow for every occasion. There's warm snow for actors to lay on when it's really cold, slippery snow for sledding, wet snow for cars driving through slush, very fine high altitude mountain snow, snow that melts, snow that doesn't melt (important in the Middle East, for example), snow that will last just minutes and snow that will last up to 25 years. We've even got fireproof snow which can be used to smother a real fire."

"We pride ourselves on being able to create anything, from warm, dry snow or cold, wet slush to soft snowdrifts and terrifying avalanches."

Snow Business's products are made of paper, plastic, foam, polymers, pure cellulose or starch. Wherever, possible eco-friendly raw materials are used. "Even our impact resistant plastics, which are used for snow that is

going to be subjected to high footfall, are recyclable and biodegradable, although only after incineration.

"The beauty of snow made from pure cellulose, for example, is that it can be washed straight into grass and rendered invisible. That makes it a very good product to use in high profile places like Regent's Park or Leicester Square in London for short-lived special events."

Cellulose snow, which becomes an organic fertiliser when washed into the ground, "is so eco-friendly we are allowed to use it in Snowdonia, Wales, in Canadian forests and in New Zealand mountains." "Often you invent something to solve a particular problem and then discover it has spin-off benefits elsewhere, or leads to other developments." That is precisely what happened when a businessman was experimenting in Paris with different polymers to find one that was better for absorbing waste in babies' nappies.

"One polymer he tried expanded so much when it became wet that it exploded! The polymer was pure white. He thought it looked like snow and reckoned therefore it must have a use somewhere. He went onto the internet, found us and flew over to show us the polymer. We thought it was fantastic, took him to Pinewood Studios where we were working on a James Bond film and ended up using the product, which we called Polymer 007, in snow for that movie." >

Artificial snow is made for Snow Business on a sub-contract basis by a network of suppliers in the UK, USA, Canada, Czech Republic, Germany and France. Darcey's company has an unusual approach to competition. It doesn't set out to beat rivals in the market place but instead "invites them to come on board as one of our manufacturers or distributors, given that we are the market leader." Snow Business has worked on a host of movies that have won Oscars for special effects, including The Curious Case of Benjamin Button, Golden Compass, Gladiator and GoldenEye. It also helped win the best visual effects BAFTA for The Day After Tomorrow and best production design BAFTA for The Madness of King George.

"Although movies are our most high profile work, it is an industry which goes from boom to bust and back again," explained Darcey. "Nice though it is to have that work, we can't rely on it. As a company, we have grown from the top down and are pushing down all the time. By that I mean we are always looking for the little jobs as well as the big ones."

Grottos have proved to be a lucrative area of work, one in Venezuela ordering \$300,000 worth of snow. "Some of the bigger grottos are more like winter theme parks." A major growth area is snow-adorned retail displays. "Last year we had one shop window contract that turned

Snow Business holds the Guinness World Record for the biggest area ever covered with artificial falling snow – New Bond Street, Bond Street and Old Bond Street simultaneously in London.

out to be the biggest contract in our company's history. We aren't allowed to name the company concerned, but we worked on 256 shop units around the world!" No job is too small or too large, be it a wedding, shop, hotel, car dealership, exhibition, fashion show, a TV series (like the UK's popular Coronation Street and Eastenders 'soaps'), a major international event or, yes, a big budget movie. The company's equipment includes the SB200winter, the quietest snow generating machines anywhere, the SnowGun backpack system, SnowSticks (pyrotechnic devices that produce super light ash resembling floating snow), and wax rigs (these were initially designed to dress fake ice on everything from actors and delicate props to huge areas in The Day After Tomorrow).



The set of The Day After Tomorrow, which won the best visual effect BAFTA.

The company handles around 300 jobs a year from its UK headquarters and a similar number from its offices in 25 countries. "We have offices from LA to Moscow, Reykjavik to Shanghai and we continue to expand." The company, which has an annual turnover of around £5 million in the UK, employs 100 people in the UK (and around 200 globally).

Several years ago, Darcey was diagnosed with cancer. "That really focuses your life. I find I now look at the world, and run my business affairs, in a different way. Before my illness I was always preoccupied with trying to clear the next hurdle. Since then I've begun to appreciate what I've really got. When I took a year out for medical reasons, the business made more money without me! No one is indispensable. Now I am a proper MD in that I deal mainly with strategic issues and try not to become involved in day-to-day issues. But it's hard to let go.

"As far as the future is concerned, it's more of the same. We never rest on our laurels and are constantly pushing back technological and other frontiers to keep ahead of the game." The kitchen table on which Darcey began his business occupies a prominent place in his company's reception area. "I could never get rid of that. It's a reminder of how far I've come."



Fake Icicles





© Michael Gramm

OF CLOCKS AND YACHTS

 **Peter Harrison**

 **Luc Manago / Michael Gramm**

The name Richard Mille is one to conjure with. For watches they bridge the gap between art and utility. Beautiful time pieces which not only tell you the time (and much more) with total Swiss certainty, but they look and feel like a piece of faultlessly designed jewellery. However, it is the innovation and use of new materials and technology that is the hallmark of their success. >

It won't surprise you to know that Peter Harrison, Richard Mille's European CEO, is a keen yachtsman. Like his watches, his sailing has been an evolution. He tells the story –



"In 2005 some good friends visited us at our house on the Isle of Wight. They arrived in their beautiful Tofinou 9.5 which with her keel raised, just managed to come alongside our pontoon on Wootton Creek. My love affair with sailboats had just started.

I acquired a Tofinou 7 almost immediately, and she is still the apple of my eye and I sail her regularly from Wootton in the summer, everybody loves her and although a bit pedestrian compared to the rest of the local boats she is a stress free experience and a relaxed way to enjoy the Solent.

Three years later we moved to Geneva and before arriving I had begun restoring a 9.5 Tofinou for days out on Lac Leman. It's a strange experience moving from the relatively reliable winds of the Solent to the joys of Alpine lake sailing. For a novice to understand how you can be trucking along nicely with your asymmetric flying and see not that far ahead of you someone doing exactly the same thing but coming towards you is an interesting initiation to the effects the mountains have on lake sailing.



This didn't stop us going out and competing in our first race, the Boll d'Or, in 2011. We started in torrential rain, were sun burnt by late afternoon and watched with interest as several spinnakers following us blew out as we went round the bottom (and only mark) at Le Bouveret in a mini cyclone – the way back to Geneva was almost the same. You really find all the weather in 24 hours – or invariably nothing at all.

Having thoroughly enjoyed our first race I immediately signed us up for Les Voiles de St Tropez, with almost 25 Tofinistas competing that year it promised to be great fun."



Having caught the racing bug, he fell for a **Frers 44** he saw at St Tropez called DARK ICE. An iconic Mediterranean day sailor, the search was on for a similar yacht and the result was a Reichel Pugh designed **Baltic 45** – JOLT II. She delivered on great day sails and week ending but was not the right yacht for regatta sailing, so the hunt was on for a no compromise racing yacht.

At that time Richard Mille announced a new material for watch making: NTPT (North Thin Ply Technology) carbon which was used to make the first RM 011 NTPT carbon case. Developed for racing yacht sails, carbon is now the must have material because of its resistance and lightness. It is also used in Formula 1 as well as for the fuselage of the Solar Impulse 2 aircraft.

NTPT has regular undulations on its surface as it is made from multiple layers of parallel filaments made from dividing carbon fibres. These layers have a maximum thickness of 30 microns and are impregnated with resin before being woven at a 45° degree angle and heated at 120° degrees at a pressure of 6 bars after which it is processed on a CNC machine in Richard Mille's Proart case factory. NTPT increases the breaking strength by 25% and the occurrence of micro cracks by 200%.

The Voiles de St Tropez 2014 saw Peter take delivery of a Botin designed **TP52** called SORCHA, with all the same high tech credentials as the RM 011. Taking 2nd place in the RORC 600, and 2nd in class in Les Voiles de St Barts, SORCHA now has a busy programme in the Solent this summer.

During Les Voiles de St Barts, an important event for Peter as Richard Mille are the title sponsors; SORCHA and her crew had the chance to use the RM 011 to great effect. Recognisable by its large date at 12 o'clock, its month displayed at 4 o'clock, its flyback chronograph. Inside the carbon cover is a movement made entirely of titanium.

Having been in the watch making business for around 30 years, Peter is very familiar with the frustrations of what works and what doesn't in terms of design and function. Of course this applies to yachting as well.

Whilst SORCHA is unlikely to be seen at his dock in Wootton this summer where his original Tofinou has pride of place; if you see her out on the water, watch out for the helmsman with a very smart carbon watch and a grin from ear to ear.



© Luc Manago

Ski Voile International

Société des Régates d'Antibes, Juan les Pins





Gavia Wilkinson-Cox International Dragon GBR761, Jerboa



Fiona Brown Photography

Held annually in Juan les Pins and hosted by the Société des Régates d'Antibes, Ski Voile International is the first International Dragon Class regatta of what is always an extremely regatta packed annual schedule.

Come Ski Voile, it's time to dust off the Christmas and New Year Celebration cobwebs, put away the festive decorations, get up out of that comfy armchair, gather your thermals, wet weather gear and ski kit and get the International Dragon regatta season off to an early kick start!

In the words made famous by Peter Sarstedt's chart topping song *'Where do you go to (My Lovely)?'* - "When you go on your summer vacation – you go to Juan les Pins." But we Dragoners don't wait for our summer vacation! We go to Juan les Pins in January and combine the joys of summer and winter sports – sailing and skiing!

The Ski Voile International regatta can be cold (even extremely cold!), can be wet, can be windy, can be rough – and can be none of these! Indeed it can be all 4 seasons in one day – but it is always fun and a pleasure to get back out on the water after some time away over the winter.

For Ski Voile 2015 the weather was pleasant, it was warm and we enjoyed good, medium strength, winds. The skiers reported a dream day in near perfect champagne conditions (both on and off the piste we were told!).

The 'ski' part takes place on the Thursday. An early (but not uncomfortably early) start and a pretty, stress free, 2 hour drive to Auron. The ski competition is a slalom course, several runs giving individual and team results for all – followed by an essential champagne lunch! The results are scored both separately for the skiing, by individual and by team, and subsequently jointly with the sailing results by team.

The 'voile' part takes place on the Friday to Sunday inclusive. And whilst the skiers ski on the Thursday, those not on the slopes get stuck in with the boat prep and launch activities (from the Yacht Club de Cannes) then

sail across to moor in the Port Gallice Marina where the regatta activities are based.

Ski Voile International regularly attracts some 25 to 40 Dragons from some 17 nations. The excellent race management team endeavours to provide 2 to 3 races each day following which on shore race volunteers provide hot drinks and snacks. This year's regatta dinner was held in the club house of the recently amalgamated yacht clubs of Antibes (Club Nautique d'Antibes and Yacht Club of Antibes) now forming the Société des Régates d'Antibes.

Ski Voile International gets us up and back out onto the race course! It kicks starts the new season's activities and it sets the scene for what is to follow on the hectic International Dragon regatta circuit. From Juan les Pins it's usually onwards to Primo Cup in Monaco, then Cannes for the first Grand Prix event of the year in February. In March the choice becomes more complicated! San Remo for the Italian Nationals or off to Cascais in Portugal for a busy spring schedule there including the 2nd Grand Prix event of the year. In early May, off to Douarnenez in Brittany, France for the 3rd Grand Prix event and so on and so on throughout the year – a very full, very varied programme of International Dragon regattas throughout Europe. There is something for everyone, everywhere.

In 2015 the World Championship is June, La Rochelle, the European Championship in Basted, Sweden in July and the Gold Cup in Kühlungsborn, Germany in August. In 2016 the Europeans - St Petersburg and the Gold Cup - Hornbaek, Denmark. One regatta just rolls on to another! Like going to the cinema – while you are there you get tempted by the trailers of what's to come – and just KNOW you have to be there – or be left out!

Top class competition, awesome competitors, a regatta circuit unmatched by any other – come join the International Dragon Class and enjoy an unrivalled regatta circuit year on year.



Girl Power at Berthon but please mind the *Skills* gap



Brian May



Berthon Library

The looming crisis of skills shortages in UK manufacturing has been much written about, but the reality is that the crisis is already with us. Here at Berthon we are committed in-house and on a wider industry basis to formal Apprentice training to help our industry to redress the balance.

We need young people to understand and appreciate apprenticeships, to see the range of careers available and to be excited about where engineering and other skilled apprenticeships could lead them. The Institute of Engineering and Technology's latest survey reported that over half its company members could not find the employees they were looking for and 59% said that the shortage would be a threat to their business in the UK.

Berthon has long seen the advantages of building a highly skilled workforce from within. This has become pivotal in ensuring that we have the right skills in the right place at the right time to service our clients' needs. 70% of our skilled workforce learnt their trade with us.

We also run a STEM event for local school children to sow the seed about a career in our industry, as well as supporting careers events and assembly speeches. Children on a tour of Berthon is a common sight and shows them what our industry has to offer them.

This summer alone, we had 15 work experience students from local schools and colleges pass through our workshops and as you read this publication we are welcoming 11 new apprentices to our Marine Engineering, Shipwright, Marine Electrical, Yacht Spraying and Boat Moving divisions.

(left and top right) Tayler Lightbourn, confident in her work as Shipwright apprentice

(right) Berthon apprentices clocked up over 12,000 nautical miles aboard FPB 64 GREY WOLF in the Pacific, Caribbean, Atlantic, English Channel, North Sea and Arctic Circle

Tayler Lightbourn is a first year Shipwright apprentice at Berthon and sadly is also currently the only girl on our programme; as the grinding wheel comes to standstill and the dust settles, her wide smile makes it only too clear that she is part of a close knit team and that she loves what she does. Before joining Berthon, she admits feeling far from confident and being rather unsure about her future. However, today, she has direction, focus and of course the opportunity to become a highly skilled technician in an industry where her skills are very much needed.

Committed and skilled senior shipwrights at Berthon mentor Tayler and her fellow apprentices through the apprenticeship. It is not just a question of providing technical guidance on best practise for the creation of hand hewn scarf joints, the programme builds strong teamwork between various trades too.

Tayler completed an insulation job on one of the RNLI 45' £2.5m Shannon lifeboats being built at Berthon currently. She reels off every detail of the project from the procedures she had to follow to the machinery used. A big job for a first year apprentice, it is these experiences, that are the building blocks for her future.

Apprentices also gain useful life skills such as managing money; Tayler has saved enough to buy a new car and is therefore growing not only as a shipwright in technical understanding and dexterity, but also as a person. Buying your own tools is mandatory for an apprentice for generations;

Tayler's chest filled with top of the range Snap-On tools is a lifetime investment – even if they do all have bright pink handles!

Berthon also recognises the holistic role that is necessary to run an effective apprentice programme, encouraging our apprentices to take part in adventures that will grow them as people and which are relevant to their work with us. Four Berthon apprentices clocked up 12,000 nautical miles on the Long Voyage from New Zealand to UK aboard FPB 64 GREY WOLF, courtesy of her owner, Peter Watson. This summer, Tayler joined GREY WOLF in Svalbard (Spitzbergen) in the Arctic Circle, learning how to watch-keep en route for Norway, even spotting a polar bear! This experience is invaluable and as she works in the Big Blue Sheds it enables her to understand better the importance of her craft and the part that she plays in our industry.



Myself and Keith Longman (Yard Manager) are both Apprentice Ambassadors for the National Apprenticeship Service working closely with British Marine and other companies such as JP Morgan, IBM, BAE, in our area to drive the skills agenda nationally by representing the Marine Industry.

Between 2009 -11 our Apprenticeship Expansion Pilot helped 15 local marine businesses to start 60 apprenticeship programmes with a graduation rate of 96.6% and was £100,000 under budget.

Five years later beneficiary Griffon Hoverwork was on the top 100 Apprenticeship Employers list and won the National Award for Medium Employer of the Year with 20 apprentices on their staff. Incidentally, their best welding team is all-female! Following this we partnered with the Worshipful Company of Shipwrights in 2012 to start the Shipwright Apprentice Scheme www.shipwrights.co.uk, attracting funding from Lloyd's Registry Foundation. This September, the scheme is on target to place 20 apprentices in 18 SME marine businesses nationally with a bursary or loan to cover their first year's wages.

At Berthon we have recognised since the time of my great-grandfather that apprentices are the future of our business. Seeing Tayler and her colleagues grow as skilled technicians and fine people is also a source of pride. Rather more girl power would also of course be welcome...

For a detailed interview with Tayler and to read her blog written during her trip aboard GREY WOLF, follow these links:

www.berthon.co.uk/greywolf
www.berthon.co.uk/tayler



Official Verderer Dominic May leading his 5 Agisters from the Verderers' Hall in Lyndhurst at the start of the Jubilee Ride around the Perambulation of the New Forest in 2012

Photo © Steve Kitcher

The Court of VERDERERS



Dominic May

Director of Berthon and Official Verderer of the New Forest



Steve Kitcher / Sally Fear

Berthon sits on the Lymington River, neatly between the Solent and the New Forest. The Solent needs no introduction to our yachting readership, but many of you drive through the New Forest to go sailing, and you may not be familiar with its unique form of governance.

The New Forest is the largest area of lowland heath in Europe. It was an ancient royal hunting forest used by the kings of Wessex and the pre-Norman conquest kings of England. William I formalised the Crown ownership in 1079 and introduced Forest law to protect the vert for the king's deer, the remnants of which survive today as the Court of Verderers.

Think of the New Forest as a giant farmers' field of 85,000 acres, shared by 700 stockmen known as commoners who graze 9,000 animals within its perambulation. The eponymous New Forest pony dominates the herd, and there are also over 3,000 cattle, plus pigs in the autumn pannage season to Hoover up the acorns which are poisonous to the other grazing stock. It is the free movement of these animals grazing the New Forest common lands that has created the unique landscape we enjoy today.

The Verderers' Court is certainly one of the most ancient courts in the land, probably the oldest still in existence. The Court sits at Queen's House in the capital of the New Forest, Lyndhurst. Queen's House (or King's House depending on who is reigning) has been the

headquarters for the Crown in the New Forest since it was built in 1297. Many monarchs have stayed there, and in times of old a number of Kings' wives lived in the house whilst their spouse was away fighting or the like: Eleanor of Castille took up residence while her husband Edward 1st was away fighting his Crusades.

So what does the Verderers' Court do? Its formal title when it sits is the Court of Swainmote and Attachment.



It is a Magistrates Court, but it hasn't sat as such since 1990 because inflation has negated the effect of the £10 maximum fine permitted under the 1964 New Forest Act. Even if a higher maximum fine were allowed in law, the Court would now almost certainly fall foul of the Human Rights Act as it makes its own byelaws, sits in judgement of them and passes sentence. It

is therefore more practical to simply take byelaw offences to the Magistrates Court.

However, the Court still sits every month except August, where the Verderers make decisions about those aspects of the New Forest which fall into its purview. The Verderers have specific responsibility under the 1877 New Forest Act for the supervision of commoning, >

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE LANDSCAPE IS
OPEN TO ALL, AND YET THOSE WHO USE THE
FOREST NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE
STOCK, WILDLIFE, FAUNA AND FLORA NEED
TO BE TREATED WITH CARE AND RESPECT.



and for protection of the landscape. The 1949 New Forest Act gives a further responsibility for regulating the utilities which want to use the land for gas, water, electricity and telephone paraphernalia. The 1970 New Forest Act adds a duty to regulate the expansion of recreation.

Members of the public are able to attend Open Court and make Presentments about any matter directly affecting the New Forest of relevance to the Verderers' considerable powers. The matter will then be discussed in closed session, and maybe further Presentments either in support or opposing can be made the following month. A decision will be announced by the Official Verderer at the start of a subsequent Court. There are five elected Verderers, voted for by commoners who graze the common lands of the New Forest and occupy at least one acre of land to which common rights attach. There are also four appointed Verderers, chosen by DEFRA, Natural England, the Forestry Commission and the New Forest National Park Authority.

The Court is chaired by the Official Verderer, a Crown appointment. The Official Verderer is completely independent, with no organisation or constituency to represent, impartially encouraging good governance without fear or favour. The position is an honour and a privilege, and does not carry any pay or expenses. I was appointed Official Verderer in 2011, following on from Berthon Marina berth holder Oliver Crosthwaite Eyre, who had served for the previous nine years.

My job is to secure the future of the New Forest for future generations: it is true to say that the New Forest wouldn't exist today if it were not for the Verderers.

An example of the importance of the influence and statutory authority of the Verderers can be found within living memory. Several airfields were built in the Forest during the Second World War to enable the RAF to mount sorties into Europe. After the war, it was the Verderers who insisted that the land was returned to open forest, in the face of a plan by the Air Ministry to sell Beaulieu Aerodrome as a commercial airport.

Aside from the obvious subjects such as the welfare of the various stock on the Forest, and the protection of the landscape, there are also a myriad of other matters that are important for the wellbeing of this unique area. Recent Presentments have highlighted the indiscriminate rape of New Forest fungi (mushrooms) by Eastern European gangs; and vociferous complaints of an encroachment by a householder at Bull Hill in Pilley, just north of Lymington.

It is important that the Verderers' Court remains nimble and effective as the New Forest has many more challenges to face today than it had in days of old, with population growth over the last century providing new challenges to the vert. Sitting between the large population centres of Salisbury, Southampton and Bournemouth, the New Forest is accessible within minutes to hundreds of thousands of people. Housing, infrastructure, roads, utilities, car parking, recreation: >



© Sally Fear

all would like a piece of the New Forest as if it were unused waste land. But it is used for agriculture, perpetuating an ancient form of pastoral farming, and we are privileged to have access to this incredible landscape. It is only with careful management that the delicate balance of this tranquil and special place is maintained. It is important that the landscape is open to all, and yet those who use the Forest need to understand that the stock, wildlife, fauna and flora need to be treated with care and respect. Careless use of the Forest can damage the ecology of the area dramatically: the simple

sequence of the Forest providing food for the grazing animals which in turn fertilise the ground can be easily, often unknowingly, disturbed. We must strive to ensure that visitors do not unwittingly damage what they have come to appreciate.

As Official Verderer, I am determined that the New Forest should remain intact and available to us all for the next thousand years. My personal objective is to leave the New Forest in a healthier state than it was when I was appointed.





Cattle by Beaulieu River
Photo © Sally Fear



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