

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2018

# UNDERWAY

NEWS and NOTES from the CRUISING COMMUNITY

Edited by Jen Brett

## ONCE IN A LIFETIME!

The view of Sydney's fireworks display was impressive from *Dream Time's* front-row seat. For tips on watching the fireworks from your own boat, see [cruisingworld.com/1802fireworks](http://cruisingworld.com/1802fireworks).

Crossing the South Pacific on a small sailboat is really quite an accomplishment, and for many cruisers, Australia represents the final destination of this epic voyage. For those lucky enough to reach Sydney Harbour in time for New Year's Eve, watching the city's fireworks — considered to be one of the most impressive displays in the world — provides the perfect occasion to celebrate.

We sailed into Sydney Harbour on December 26, after cruising 32,000 nautical miles, meandering our way from New York to Australia over the past 10 years. To commemorate our arrival on *Dream Time*, our 1981 Cabo Rico, we chose to anchor next to the opera house in Farm Cove — what experienced locals consider the epicenter of excitement on New Year's Eve. As one local put it, "Mate, it's about as close to 7 tons of explosives as you wanna get!"

We arrived early, and on New Year's Eve, my wife, Catherine, and I managed to hold *Dream Time's* front-row position in Farm Cove, on the edge of the exclusion zone, without getting arrested, assaulted or damaged. The tiny cove swelled beyond belief with boats bumping, squeezing and pushing into every conceivable space. And just when we thought the bay had reached absolute capacity, another wave of enthusiastic late arrivals somehow managed to burrow inside. Fenders were needed and forced raft-ups were common. Our scope, which began at a moderate 3-to-1 was finally reduced to a measly 1.5-to-1. But *Dream Time* held, the weather remained calm, and positive vibes and shared merriment in the bay helped reduce a little of the stress between short-fused, close-quartered captains.

When the sun dipped behind Sydney's skyline,

NEVILLE HOCKLEY



PASSAGE Notes



Miami Boat Show

Take a break from winter and check out the latest in boats and gear in the balmy climes of Miami. The Miami International Boat Show takes place over Presidents Day weekend, February 15-19, 2018. For the first time, the Strictly Sail portion of the show will be located in the same location as the powerboats: Miami Marine Stadium Park and Basin on Virginia Key.

More than 50 sailboats will be in the water exclusively on Pier 9, and sailing gear and accessories will be showcased inside tents F and J. The show will also feature daily educational seminars. For more information, visit miamiboatshow.com/sail.

Keep Up with the Caribbean

As storm-ravaged locations get back on their feet, get the latest news and information from charter companies and more at Cruising World's Caribbean & Florida Cruisers Facebook Group (facebook.com/cruisingworld).

maritime police declared the anchorage closed to new traffic — we had made it! There was a universal sigh of relief in the cove. Fenders, lines and anchor chains were adjusted for the last time of the year as hundreds of boats, in an anchorage that normally supports just a dozen, settled down in anticipation of Sydney's largest fireworks display in history.

We soaked in the surroundings from Dream Time's coachroof, amazed that we had managed to secure an uninterrupted panoramic view of the opera house and the entire Sydney Harbour Bridge, and the energy on the water and shoreline, where up to a million spectators had gathered to watch the display, was electrifying. We invited kayakers to raft up to our dinghy, we shared drinks and laughs, and the charter catamaran that had aggressively anchored at the last minute just feet from our bow even graciously presented plates heaped with delicious barbecued kebabs and lamb chops as an apologetic offering.

The New Year's events began in the early evening, and for hours we were completely transfixed by daredevil aerobatic displays over the harbor, Tall Ship and megayacht light parades, and video projections. At the stroke of midnight, an eruption of pyrotechnics shook the city and for 12 magical minutes consumed the entire Sydney Harbour Bridge in an explosion of color that decorated the opera house in a dazzling canopy of light.

It was an unforgettable experience, and like Carnival in Panama, the Matava'a o te Henua Enana festival in the Marquesas and the Naghol land-diving ceremony in Vanuatu, it was a defining moment in our world voyage. Sure, it was a little stressful at times — we had to assert our position, fend off boats to avoid collision and politely ask others not to drop their anchor across our chain — but it was definitely worth it. In fact, it was such an awesome experience we're considering doing it all over again next year!

Although, perhaps on somebody else's boat. —Neville Hockley

COME VISIT, PLEASE

We run a business in the Virgin Islands. Many of our customers have contacted us to ask what they can do to help in the recovery. I tell them that there are many who have been devastated by the hurricanes who need support for their basic survival needs. To help them, we recommend they give money to organizations like usvirecovery.org that will provide immediate relief for those in need of food, water and shelter. I also tell them that if they really want to support the Virgin Islands, they need to go there this season. Although the news media makes it look like everything is destroyed in the islands, many businesses have survived the hurricanes intact, and many who suffered damage are recovering quickly. For them, the worst effect of the hurricanes is not the storm damage but the lack of visitors. Many restaurants, for example, are already open and ready for business but will fail without diners.

Many businesses, and the Virgin Islands in general, will be hurt more financially by visitors not coming than by the combined effect of all the hurricanes.

—Capt. Michael Brown, Virgin Islands Sailing Academy, St. Thomas, via Email

PLAY IT SAFE

Every year, I look forward to and enjoy your Special Issue: Safety at Sea [November/December 2017]. It is a great public service.

Fatty Goodlander is always entertaining and educational. Heather Francis' article on life rafts ["A Small Boat for the Big Emergency"] reminds me of getting into a raft with six other people — the most uncomfortable, most educational of safety drills. The refresher on ditch bags ["What's in the Bag?"] and update on safety electronics ["Improving the Odds"] were timely as, starting in 2018, the Cruising Club of America's Newport Bermuda Race will require each crewmember to

have an AIS man-overboard personal locator beacon.

The CCA also serves the boating public with information regarding safety and seamanship: cruisingclub.org/seamanship/seamanship.htm.

Ernest L. Godsbalk, Chair, Safety and Seamanship Committee, the Cruising Club of America

TO THE CUP

Herb McCormick's report, "The Kiwis' Cup," featured in the September issue, was super. A great story and reference for us old-timers who have watched many real America's Cup races here in Newport. Thank you for illuminating their sailing ability

and wisdom. I believe we all can now look forward to a new defense of the Cup.

Jay Helme, Sr. VIA EMAIL

A design concept of the AC75, which will be sailed in the next Cup, was released in November 2017.



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