



THE BAHAMA JOURNAL
THREE GUYS AND A BOAT
A SAILING ODYSSEY

Capt. Lee Henderson, Mates Ed Crane & Craig Letho
February and March, 2011
recorded by Ed Crane



PART I
Outbound

DAY ONE

Thursday, February 3, 2011

MARCO ISLAND DEPARTURE

On February 3rd, 2011, the Brigadoon II, a 36 foot PDQ Catamaran, hull # 14, departed Thrush Court on Marco Island Florida at 12:50PM, bound for the Bahamas. We expect to return sometime in early



April. At the helm is our Captain, Lee Henderson. On board for the adventure are Mates Craig Letho, and your author Ed Crane. The planned literary is available in a Sailing Association of Marco Island (SAMI) October 2010 press release. It is provided in Appendix I.

The first leg of the trip is from Marco to Marathon in the Keys, a distance of about 80 NM (nautical miles). One nautical mile is equal to 1.151 miles. Conditions on this first day are tranquil...calm seas, 4-5 knot winds out of the south, not at all what we had

in mind. So we are motor sailing. Our twin 10HP Yamaha 4 strokes are churning up the Gulf! ETA (estimated time of arrival) for Marathon is around 3AM. Pretty late, so we decided to stop at East Cape Sable instead of dodging crab pots in the dark, and anchored up for the night. While still underway to Cape Sable, Chef Craig served up a sumptuous meal of Chicken-Dottie, trimmed out with rice and corn. Mate Ed cleaned up, and we set up the new as yet untested 3rd berth over the refrigerator. Arrived around midnight and crashed without even a cocktail...



DAY TWO (25 08.41N 81 09.44W) Cape Sable

Friday, February 4

Up before dawn, broke down 3rd berth, pulled anchor and got under way before



dawn. Craig reports that the new berth is a success! Beautiful sunrise...perhaps the first one I've seen since retiring 10 years ago! (I'm not a morning person). Craig's at the helm, dodging crab pots, bound for Marathon. We are discussing making the run for the Bahamas straight from Marathon this afternoon, and sailing through the night.



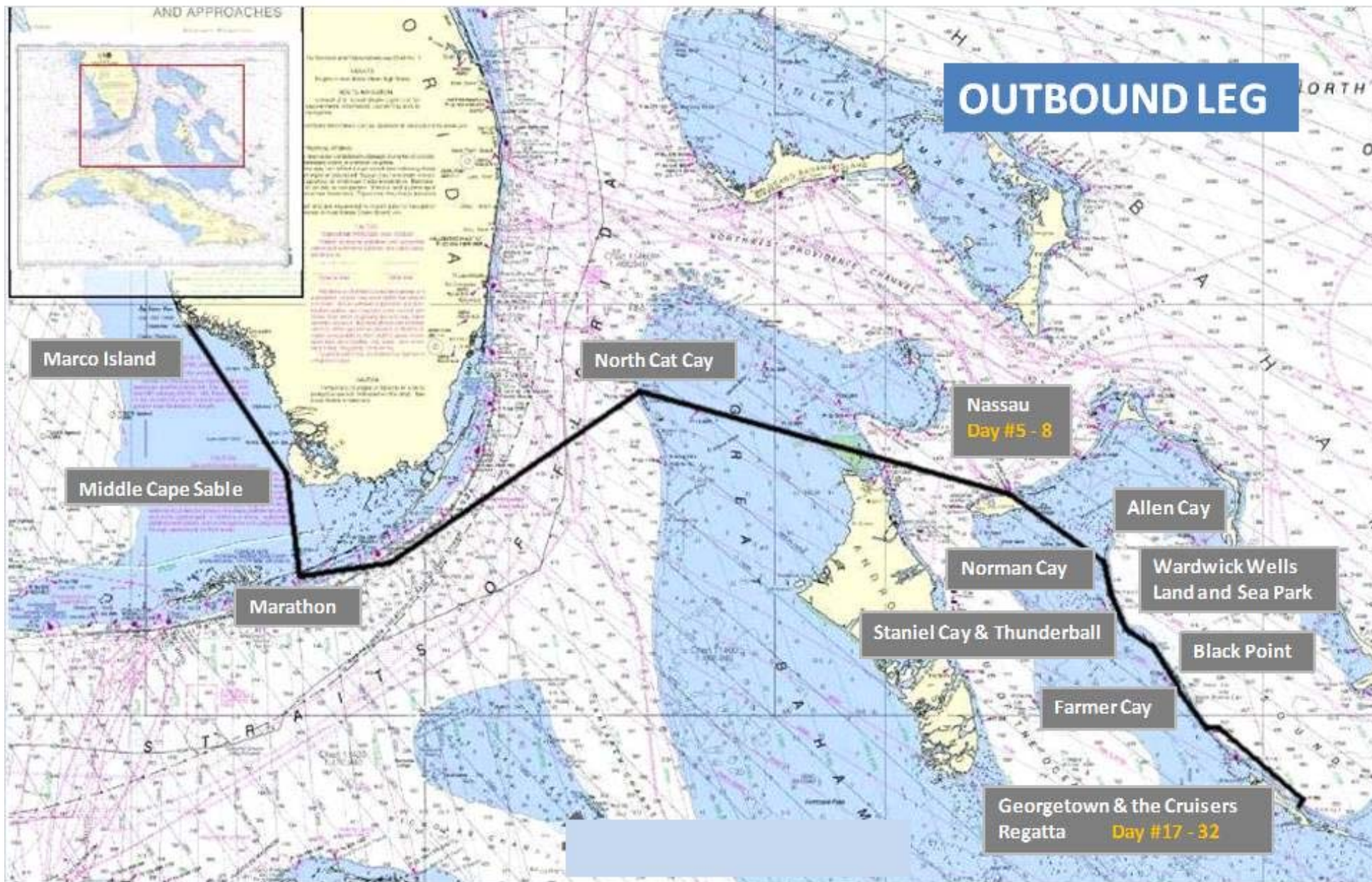
Weather is favorable for a gulf stream crossing. Pulling into Marathon the belt on the auto pilot broke. Fortunately Lee has a spare.

Arrived at Marathon, only to discover that the GPS chip Lee ordered would not arrive at West Marine until 4PM, so we filled up on gas and water, and tied up to an abandoned dock to wait. About 1:45 PM West Marine called to say that the part had



BRIGADOON II BAHAMAS CRUISE - February & March 2011

Crew: Lee Henderson, Ed Crane, and Craig Lehto



arrived ahead of schedule, so maybe our luck is turning? Lee took off to get the part, while Craig jogged up to the store for some Mountain Due. Lee returned with the chip and a replacement for the spare auto pilot belt that we had used, so we are back in business.

We shoved off at about 3PM, heading up Hawks Channel toward Key Largo. The plan is to work our way up the coast along the keys, and then make a run for the Bahamas. We're looking at about 100+ nautical miles of sailing, so we will be sailing all night, crossing the gulf stream, and arriving in the Bahamas sometime Saturday afternoon. It's important that we do this because the weather for a crossing deteriorates Saturday night and into next week, and we have a mission: George Town on Great Exuma by February 25th, for the Cruisers Regatta. This is a week long party that starts on the 28th.

DAY THREE (25 33.9N 79 16.6W) Cat Cay

Saturday, February 5th

Well we arrived in the Bahamas at Cat Key ahead of schedule about 9am this morning, after an incredible night of sailing...'*A Night to Remember*' ...hummm, maybe I should write a book?

Yesterday, as we were sailing up Hawks Channel about an hour from Sunset, we discussed the trip plan. It was going to be difficult avoiding the lobster pot buoys in the dark so we decided to cross the barrier reef and sail up the coast in the deeper water, without the pots. A little later we shortened the trip by setting a direct course for Cat Key light while still well below Key Largo, figuring we had about a 95 mile sail that would take about 20 hours.

Crossing the Gulf Stream at night in 10-20 Knot cold winds, rough seas while dodging ships, was certainly one for the Bucket List! There was quite a bit of boat traffic, mostly BIG commercial vessels and Cruise ships. Sometimes it was difficult to read the lights and know which way they were going or how big they were. Craig and I took turns at 3 hour shifts throughout the night. Lee camped out in the cabin on call whenever we needed him. Overall he got less sleep than either of us. We had one close call with some merchant ship, and the line to the roller furling broke sometime after 2am, making it impossible to reef in the Genoa, but we pulled through.

The most exciting event with merchant ships that night was when Craig was on watch and Ed & Lee were sleeping. With difficulty reading a merchants lights Craig woke Lee. Lee was not sure either. There was one light high followed by another white light and then one red light. This meant to Lee there was a very large ship about to cross our bow and then we saw the outline of the ship. It was huge and close. We maneuvered a bit and passed about 200 yards to his stern. You could look almost straight up and see the anchor on the stern of the ship. An underwear change was in order after this...!

During the crossing top speed over the ground (GPS speed) was 10.8 knots. Maximum speed through the water was 13.5 knots due to the gulf stream. Sunrise over the Bahamas was a very welcome sight for three exhausted wet sailors!



We stopped at the Cat Cay Yacht Club to register with the customs officials, only to find out they wanted an extra \$100 to tie up at the dock. (Too late we learned from a local that the dock-master would have accepted a 12 pack of beer instead) So we headed out, but didn't

get very far when the Topping lift broke. So we headed back, registered with customs, and paid for the night. Craig & I jury rigged some repairs that should keep us going. We'll try to replace the roller furling line in Nassau. The yacht club is a beautiful place, but for the rich and famous! We didn't fit in all that well. The place was oddly deserted, with this being peak season. There were only 3 customers at Happy Hour: Craig, Lee & me, plus Norman the bartender. Two Klicks (Bahamian beer) and a rum & coke was \$23 with tip. That night we grilled Terriaki steak that I had marinated and frozen, along with a salad and, my favorite, Lesueur Baby Green Peas.

DAY FOUR (25 33.9N 79 16.6W) Cat Cay

Sunday, February 6th

We departed Cat Cay this morning before dawn, bound for Chub Cay, about 75 nautical miles away. For a night person who doesn't drink coffee, I'm undergoing a transformation, perhaps even reinventing myself. This morning I greeted the sunrise (my 3rd consecutive one!), with a cup of coffee in hand! Cindy may not recognize me 57 days from now.

Conditions today are beautiful: sunny, warm, and a reasonable wind for sailing (although a bit slow at 4-5 knots. I put out the trolling line to see if I could catch dinner. Around 2:30pm we had to start both motors when the wind died. Because of our slow speed we plan to just anchor up on the bank short of Chub Cay and make for Nassau early tomorrow morning, a sail of about 50 nautical miles. No fish!

After anchoring Craig and I went for a swim. We had a little engine trouble and needed to work on the problem from under the boat. We eventually got it fixed, and then got to try out the new salt water soap/shampoo...it works quite well.

Chef Craig tossed together a great Italian feast using some of the sausage I had put up at home. We ate out of our bowls on the deck under the stars...



A US Coast Guard & Bahamian helicopter flew over. No boat traffic in sight. I expressed curiosity that our Coast Guard patrols Bahama. Lee says it's another example of Obama-ism...much like Social-ism, he says.

DAY FIVE (25 27.31N 78 17.08W) The Bahama Bank

Monday, February 7th

Made the coffee, and departed our anchorage on the Bank before dawn, bound for Nassau, about 50



nautical miles away. It's not a nice day...strong wind on the bow, heavy waves. Can't sail...have to motor. We're taking a beating, so we discussed putting in at Chub Cay, hanging out for the afternoon, and leaving for Nassau in the morning. But, sailors that we are, consensus was that we strike out motor-sailing for

Nassau as originally planned, and try to get there before dark. At the end of the day, we had motored 40 nautical miles, but were able to sail the last 10 into Nassau, arriving around 5pm. Nassau and the Atlantis Resort could not have looked better. After some trouble setting the anchor, even with Craig diving on it, we settled in for happy hour on the boat. No dinner tonight...too



exhausted, so just snacks. Good breakfast planned for tomorrow.

Set the anchor drag alarm on the GPS and sacked out.

At the end of our 5th day we have logged 360 nautical miles of sailing. I would guess we may have used about 35 gallons of gas.

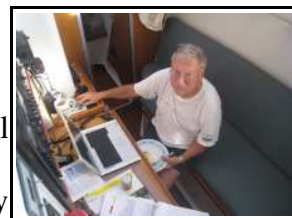
DAY SIX (25 04.54N 77 19.01W) Nassau

Tuesday, February 8th

Woke up this morning to another beautiful day...sunny, warm, light breeze. Chef 2nd Class Ed prepared delicious omelets (cheese, ham, terriaki steak & mushrooms). Craig and I dined on the after deck,



while Lee chose to have his breakfast at the navigators station, working the Single Side Band (SSB) radio in order to get a weather fax. It seems we have an email problem. Someone has sent us a huge email, probably with an attachment, and the whole system has crashed and is locked up. We will have to call someone stateside to work with folks to fix this, or we will no longer have email. In fact, they may



think we are bad people and take away Lee's HAM license...hmm, bummer!

We have been having trouble with the wind machine. It is not reading correctly. While moored at the marina, we sent Craig up the mast to check it out, but were unsuccessful in repairing it. We still have direction, but the wind speed indicator does not work. Oh well, we can get along without it. Columbus didn't have a wind machine, did he? Then again, he couldn't find North America either, so I guess he's not a good role model. Going up the mast is a big deal. Craig drew the short straw and got the crotch seat. I manned the lift line, Lee on the safety line. Pretty serious stuff as you can see from the pictures. The top of the mast is about 50 feet above the water.



This afternoon, after a much needed shower for all, we headed out on foot for downtown Nassau. We stopped 'under the bridge' to Paradise Island and had a Klick with the locals. They seem like nice people.



Ended up with a good lunch/dinner downtown of pan fried conch and grouper, with a local beer, Sands, that I was unfamiliar with. Thirst quenching, but nothing special.



Back aboard the Brigadoon, we had a small happy hour, and some male bonding, while discussing the plans for the upcoming adventure. We plan to stay in the marina tomorrow, and leave early (hmm...bummer, probably before dawn again) for Allen's Cay, and the Iguanas... Things are really going to get busy, now that the commuting is over, we are here, and the adventure can begin!

We ran my Honda 2000 watt generator to recharge the batteries since we are not on shore power. It did the job. Batteries were low probably because we had to reset the anchor several times the other night. The windlass is much like running a starter motor in a car...lots of current, and rough on the batteries.

DAY SEVEN (25 04.54N 77 19.01W) Nassau

Wednesday, February 9th

I got to sleep in this morning, until 7:30, when the morning guys started washing the deck and banging around. They had probably been up since shortly after I went to sleep, and were getting restless, looking for something to do. The conflict is that night people are also quite capable of getting up early, so we are flexible, but morning people are helpless and will fall asleep in the middle of a sentence at 9pm regardless. So there is little compromise.

The email problem has been solved. Someone copied us on an email containing an attachment, and it locked us up. The incoming mail with attachment was equivalent to over 100 plain text messages. But all is well now. Dottie was able to fix it.

Today is clean up day. Scrubbed the boat top to bottom, went shopping overhauled the fridge. Craig took off to do the laundry. Today we'll 'load' up our cameras, dress like tourists, go across the bridge, and explore Atlantis. I say 'load up' because Craig still has one of those cameras that uses those little tubes of film stuff...

Stopped 'under the bridge' at our regular locals hang-out 'Tony's Seafood' for a frosty Klick, then over



the bridge to Paradise Island. Lee and I had been there before, so we showed Craig around. None of us were particularly impressed. We pooled our money and



put \$1 in a slot machine, but didn't win. Being a high roller, I thought to invest another \$, but the slot machine would not accept Bahamian money...oh well.

Climbing the bridge on the way back left us parched, so it was back to Tony's for more Klicks. Billy (*I guess Tony was on vacation?*) chopped up a conch salad for us (live raw conch with veggies in lime and orange juice). We chased that down with an order of conch fritters, and more Klicks. Craig has had a mind expanding day of firsts! Conch salad, conch fritters and 3 beers in one day, in a foreign country...wow! Denver get ready!



It was by now 8pm, and past Craig's bedtime, but Lee and I checked out the Poop Deck restaurant/bar at our Marina. Nice place...might stop by for happy hour and dinner on the way back. After a couple of rum and cokes, and it was back to the boat to crash.

DAY EIGHT (25 04.54N 77 19.01W) Nassau

Thursday, February 10th

Up before dawn, and off to Allen's Cay, about 35 nautical miles east from Nassau. Light S-SE breeze

off the nose, but we can still sail close in. As we approached Allen's Cay this afternoon I saw the Aqua Cat. In May 2009 I spent a week on this fine live aboard dive boat. Twenty 23 dives in 6 days!



Arrived about 1:45P and dropped anchor. I made up some spaghetti and sausage for lunch. We pigged out and then launched the dingy, and pattered around a bit. Stopped at the beach and visited with the Iguanas. There's another PDQ, the 'Hogie Cat', anchored nearby, so we paid them a visit. Lee snuck back later for a rum and coke and some PDQ bonding. Nice couple from Canada named Gordon & Margaret Hogan.



We are anchored in a beautiful sheltered cove. Crystal clear water, white sandy beach. Sandwiches for dinner. Lethargic and not too hungry after that big lunch.



More trouble with the roller furling line. The clamp on the drum is cutting the new line. Lee is working on it. We'll remove the clamp that's causing the problem, and hope the cracks don't get bigger. Lee impressed us by cutting and splicing the new line so effectively that it will still pass through the pullies and the latch...what a sailor!

Last call for the refrigerator room! Craig needs to set up his berth, which goes over the the refrigerator. It's almost 8PM and he's fading fast. Lee and I adjourned to the poop-deck for Scotch and Cigars. It appears we way underestimated the Scotch, since we are half way through the 1.75L, with 7weeks to go. Let's hope one of these sandbars has a liquor store.

What a beautiful night! Perfect temperature, light wind, rising moon. Not much room for improvement.

DAY NINE (24 44.64N 76 50.38W) Allen's Cay

Friday, February 11

Set sail from Allen's Cay, bound for Norman Cay, about 10 nautical miles away. Winds are out of the South, so we are going to tack.

As of this morning we have traveled 370 nautical miles GPS. (That means actual nautical miles over the ground, not as the crow flies.)



Arrived at Norman Cay just after noon. Lunch was chicken and corn chowder, with an extra can of corn...tasty! Launched the dingy, and took a look at the plane sunk in the harbor, then to the beach and walked to MacDuff's Bar & Grill.



Good time at MacDuff's bar. Lovely twenty-one year old Kelly served us beers. One was a Bahamian knock off of Heineken. In addition to the bar that serves

lunch and dinner, they have 4 cottages they rent out for



\$250/night. Norman Cay has a landing strip, and a history of being a drug smugglers drop point.

Back at the boat we all went for a swim, and cleaned up with our salt water soap. Strong current.

Dinner was grilled flank steak and green beans. Lee and I enjoyed scotch and cigars on the poop deck. Ran the generator for a while to charge up the batteries. Yea generator!

DAY TEN (24 35.44N 76 48.78W) Norman Cay

Saturday, February 12th

Strong wind out of the north. Got under way about 9:30am, bound for Warderick Wells Cay, Boo Boo Hill and mooring ball #18. We reserved the mooring yesterday. Sailing with the Genoa only.

Arrived about 2pm. The strong wind (estimated 20-30 knots, since our wind machine no longer reads wind speed) is still blowing out of the north and it's sweatshirt weather. Craig and I made a good team for picking up the mooring ball and securing it to the boat. Next time we do this however we WILL wear our life vests!

Stayed on the boat the rest of the day and relaxed. Craig fixed Chicken-Dottie for dinner and we retired early (even me!). Ran the Honda generator for a bit to top off the batteries. Sure glad we brought the generator!!

DAY ELEVEN (24 23.60N 76 38.12W) Warderick Wells Cay

Sunday, February 13th

Warderick Wells is a protected Bahamian Land and Sea Park.

We have a cold front that is stalled South of us. Wind is still blowing. Breakfast was pancakes, spam & coffee.



Lee has corrupted both of us. We now drink coffee, and may have to start making two pots. Craig and I added a double safety line to the mooring, and we launched the dingy. We met Ted Jenkinson from the S/V Ragtime2 moored next to us. Nice guy from Canada, sailing alone. He joined us on our hike. We're headed for Boo Boo Hill, about a 4 mile walk, where cruisers leave behind artifacts. We have our own artifact. I made it out of synthetic decking and it should last a long time, barring a hurricane. It's now screwed to a big 4X4 with stainless steel screws and held down with rocks. There was a lot of interesting stuff on Boo Boo Hill! I even saw a plack from the Aqua Cat, my dive boat mentioned earlier. And what a view!



On the beach there is skeleton of a sperm whale. The sign says it died from eating plastic, like plastic bags. Plastic is really bad for the environment.

We had a little excitement while securing the Dingy. The pin in the aft pulley broke, dumping Craig hard on his ass, and the dingy back into the water. Good thing Craig is a youngster, and made of rubber.

I probably would have broken something! Lee went through all his spare parts but did not have a replacement pin. He and I made one by filing down a bigger stainless steel pin. It took a while, but seems to be working fine. No problem...sailors have a lot of time!

Ted came over for happy hour. We invited him for dinner, but turns out he already has an engagement, so we served heavy snacks (Even spell-check can't spell that French word for snacks! Whores-des-louvers?). We didn't get around to dinner after all the snacks, so retired early. The cloud cover is breaking up so we are hopeful for a break in the weather. Lee and I had cigars on the poop deck. 'Poop deck' is an interesting term. I expect in the old sailing days it may have had a literal meaning? We just use the head!

DAY TWELVE (24 23.60N 76 38.12W) Warderick Wells Cay

Monday, February 14th Valentines Day

Woke up to cloudless skies, but still a fair amount of wind. I cooked spam, mushroom & cheddar omelets for breakfast. We're heading out for Staniel Cay after breakfast, since the forecast is for the wind to increase tonight.



Nice sail. Strong winds off the port bow, with both the Genoa and Main reefed. Arrived at about 1pm, and tied up at the Staniel Cay Yacht Club. It's only \$75 a night, so we'll stay at least one night, probably two. The yacht club has a bar and a small pool.



Staniel Cay is an interesting little town. Two Bond movies we filmed here as well a Disney movie SPLASH. The town has a couple groceries (about the size of my garage), a general store (same size), a couple bars and restaurants. There's also an airport.



We walked around and did a little shopping. Not much selection, but not as expensive as I would have thought. We picked up some fresh baked bread, an anchor for the dingy, and some groceries. Lee got reacquainted with Mrs Smith, owner of the Pink Pearl Super Market. Mrs Smith had 11 children. Her daughter now runs the grocery. As we were walking back to the Yacht Club



who did we run into but Kelly, our 21 year old bartender from MacDuffs on Norman Cay!! Some friends of hers with a plane were flying her around to a few islands on her day off. Small world.



Craig went for a swim off the boat. Lee and I took a dip in the pool. It was COLD! On the way to the pool we watched some folks feeding the sharks...too late to tell Craig, who was well on his way swimming to the beach. For the record, he made it back in one piece.



After getting cleaned up we headed back to the Yacht Club bar, and then

ended up 'in town' at Big Dog's Restaurant & Bar, hanging out with the owner Dale and the locals. Big Dog's is brand new and still somewhat under construction. Dale, formerly a fisherman, built the whole thing himself and opened in June 2010. While drinking at the bar, we met Trevor Munnings who did the excellent tile work. If you're in the islands and need some tile work this is the guy to call. You can reach him at TrevorMunnings@gmail.com or 1-242-324-3455.

Cindy sent me an email today. We do have regular email service via SSB radio. The subject of the email was "Happy VD Day" This is, after all, "Three guys and a boat", so we're not quite sure what to do with this?!

DAY THIRTEEN (24 23.60N 76 38.12W) Staniel Cay

Tuesday, February 15th

Woke up to another beautiful day in paradise. Craig made French Toast using the fresh bread we bought yesterday. We're all a bit slow this morning, having partied pretty hard last night. Somehow we overlooked eating dinner...bit of a mistake!

We're still at the Yacht club and will spend another night. One of the guys from the club found a piece of 1.5" PVC that we were able to fashion into an extender for the dingy motor throttle. Our regular one is home in Lee's garage along with the dingy anchor! We've updated the checklist for next time.



We went for a long walk today up to Club Thunderball 007 Restaurant and Bar, high on a cliff with a beautiful view. Lee said it had been a jumping place 11 years ago, but it was closed today. Someone in town later said they thought it was only open weekends. We took some pictures.

Laid around the pool for a while. Craig went for a swim with the sharks and then fixed pork sandwiches for lunch/dinner. We got cleaned up,



and off to happy hour. Drank Klicks at the Yacht Club Bar, and off to Bad Dogs, where Dale, the owner, served us Klick Golds (7% alcohol, as opposed to 4.5% for the Klick lights). This is just like Africa. The beers all seem to taste and look the same. They are named and graded by alcohol content. Lee and I also finished off with a couple Guinness, one of my favorites. Overall beers are very reasonable. Bar price for everything is \$4 a bottle. Including Guinness.

DAY FOURTEEN (24 23.60N 76 38.12W) Staniel Cay

Wednesday, February 16th

Yet another beautiful day in paradise. We'll be leaving the Yacht Club this morning and stopping for some snorkeling a Thunderball Cave where the James Bond 007 movie was filmed, then on to Black Point Cay where we can refill the fresh water tanks from the town well. It used to be free, we'll see.



Craig and I snorkeled around the cave. The tide was too high to safely go in, but we could see inside

from the various openings. It was cool! I would have liked to explore it with tanks.

Craig tells us he comes from a small town in Minnesota called Embarrass. The town made the news the other day as the coldest place in the country at minus 37 degrees F. Wow! I'm surprised he doesn't drink Scotch to keep the blood flowing...I'd be 'embarrassed' to tell people that with such a background... Then again, maybe he's just pulling my leg. If I ever get an internet connection again I'll Google it.



Arrived at Black Point early afternoon. The water is still free but we did leave a small donation. We have only used 20 gallons since leaving Nassau. We're conservative sailors, we just may not smell so good? Spent some time walking around the town. Interesting place...very laid back. A couple of restaurants/bars and a grocery store. The people are very friendly. Everyone, even the kids, say hello when they pass you in the street. We had lunch at Lorraine's Internet Cafe, and bought 2 loaves of fresh bread (wheat & coconut) from her Mom. Right out of the oven!!



It's 7pm and we are sitting on the poop-deck eating fresh coconut bread with butter, having a cocktail. The wind is blowing, it's cool, and the moon is full...does it get any better than this?

Lee and I smoked cigars, while Craig snoozed. It started to drizzle, so we turned in around 10pm. Craig said today he wanted to see a Mermaid. We told him he'd have to start drinking Scotch to make that happen. Lee and I see them all the time!

DAY FIFTEEN (24 05.99N 76 24.16W) Black Point Cay

Thursday, February 17th

Raining this morning, with a strong wind. Looks like we'll be here for at least the day. Fortunately we are ahead of schedule for George Town.

Craig fixed French Toast with the coconut bread we bought yesterday. Breakfast included Bloody Mary's made with V8 juice. I cleaned up. Weather is clearing up.



To get to George Town we need to leave the protected leeward (bank) side of the Exumas and venture out into the Sound Side, which is subject to the constant trade winds and is much rougher. We'll be looking for a weather window to make the run. We're about 50 NM from George Town.



Today's laundry day. So it's off to the Rockside Laundromat, which has it's own dingy dock. The other guys had big bags of laundry...I had this little one. Maybe I need to



change my clothes more often? We got everything into the dryers and Lee and I took off for a Klick, served up by Zavago the bartender at the local pub, while Craig read and watched over the laundry.

There's probably over 20 boats anchored here at Black Point, probably most waiting for the same weather window for George Town.

Relaxed on the boat this afternoon and then went into town for happy hour. Met up with Ted and had a few beers at the Scorpio Bar, then off to dinner at Deshamon's Restaurant. I had the cracked conch. The other three guys had the snapper. We all had rice and peas, the national dish. Everybody enjoyed the meals, the ambiance and the friendly people. It feels good to leave some money behind on these islands. Nobody's trying to cheat you, they are just trying to make a living.

Ted has decided to stay here a while. He changed his son's reservation to fly into Black Point, rather than George Town. It's all about the weather. He's concerned he won't get to George Town in time to meet the plane. We hope he doesn't end up with knarly weather next week.

DAY SIXTEEN (24 05.99N 76 24.16W) Black Point Cay

Friday, February 18th

I'm up to 2/3 cup of coffee in the morning, so I guess I'm addicted? I'll have to see if I can find our coffee pot when I get home.

Beautiful day, with lots of wind. We'll have a leisurely breakfast of French Toast (gotta use up that home made bread!) and then sail to Little Farmer's Cay.

Beautiful sail. We were making 8 knots for a while. Got here about noon, and anchored, but didn't like the spot so moved to a mooring ball. Craig dove it and we didn't like what he saw, so we moved to a third spot and anchored, with 100 feet of scope out (the anchor rode is all chain). Lee's new nickname is now Capt Scope!

Funky day, overcast and cool one minute, hot and sunny the next, with constant wind, and some rain. Snacks and drinks on the poop-deck. We'll wait for the tide to turn and put out another anchor, then go into town. We'll be almost on the bottom at 3.5 feet when the tide is low at 2:00pm

We have now traveled 450 NM (or about 518 miles, or 834 KM), and will be close to 500 NM when we reach George Town. It looks like this adventure will easily break 1000 miles of sailing.

I'm the Quartermaster on this trip, which is to say I provisioned the boat. About \$700 worth of food, much of it from Costco's wholesale. I packed the stuff into every nook and cranny in the galley, the frig (we don't have a big freezer), and elsewhere. So, we have been living large, and eating well, needing only to replenish perishables and buy a few things like homemade bread. We'll take inventory in George Town and re-provision as necessary



for the return voyage.



We took the dingy into town. At first things seemed rather deserted. Lee knocked on the door to the restaurant/bar. Terry Bain, the owner opened up for us. What an interesting guy. Terry is the philosopher king of Little Farmers Cay! He had been born on Farmers Cay 63 years ago. At 7 he was sent away to school in Nassau. He ended up traveling the world, spending 10 years in Libia as a 'facilitator', among other things. The guy was knowledgeable and curious about everything, and unusually articulate. We had a great time, and ended up with autographed T-shirts. It seems that our host is a published author and a bit of a celebrity in these parts.



Farmers Cay is very laid back, as you can see from the sign on Terry's bar.



DAY SEVENTEEN (23 57.92N 76 19.17W) Little Farmers Cay

Saturday, February 19th

Woke up this morning to a favorable weather window, so cleaned up and headed out for George Town without breakfast. Arrived about 1pm after a pretty wild blue water sail, averaging about 7.5 knots.



Anchored in front of the Hamburger Beach Bar, and dingied ashore. Naturally we all had to get hamburgers and beers from Alvin. Chatting with some folks in the bar was intimidating. One guy had been living in the South Pacific and sailing around for 45 years.



Another was complaining about having to fill up his 800 gallon gas tank at \$5/gallon! Do the math on that one!



Craig went for a swim. Lee and I dingied over to another PDQ anchored near us. He thought he knew them. Turns out they bought the boat in 2002 from a broker, and didn't know the previous owners.

They told us they had been living on their 'Dream Chaser' since 2003...I'm humbled by our little 2 month adventure!



Craig set up his inflatable kayak. Looks like it's going to be fun.

DAY EIGHTEEN (23 30.28 N 75 45.79W) George Town

Sunday, February 20th

Woke up to a beautiful day. Dingied over to Volley Ball Beach. Church service on the beach was just wrapping up (shucks!). They have a great beach bar called *The Chat & Chill*, where we introduced Craig to Breakfast Beers! I'm not sure he's ready for this. From there to the new St. Francis Yacht club close by, looking for a printout of the regatta events, but they didn't have one.



Then back to the boat for better shoes so we could climb the mountain to see the monument. What a view from the top! We climbed down to the beach on the ocean side, and walked back to the HB beach bar. Craig swam back to the boat, while Lee and I enjoyed a couple brewskies at the HB beach bar.



Back on board we cleaned up and Craig prepared the spaghetti, our offering for the pot luck at the HB party that night. As it turns out ours was about the best thing on the buffet, and they gobbled it up.



The party was great. A number of cruisers sang and played. Alvin offered a happy hour with 4 Sands

Light beers for \$10. Lee and I got a bit hammered. Craig behaved himself.



DAY NINETEEN (23 30.28 N 75 45.79W) George Town

Monday, February 21st

By the time I got up Craig was off in his inflatable kayak. It seems to work quite well.



We're going into town this morning, after moving the Brigadoon II across the bay. It would have been a long wet dingy ride otherwise. Had Dinty Moore Stew over Ramen Noodles for Brunch.



I was a bit disappointed with George Town. It did offer free water, a grocery store, restaurants and a couple of bars and liquor stores, but overall some of the other places have been better.



All the dingies pass under the road into 'Lake Victoria' and tie up at the dingy dock. There's quite a strong tidal current running under the bridge, and there's not much clearance side

to side. Lake Victoria is not a lake, it's a tidal basin.

I picked up \$300 cash from the bank in the box at a local bank. Beers at The Two Turtles, and Eddies. Back to the boat for an early crash...we were beat! Read my Kindle until midnight.

DAY TWENTY (23 30.28 N 75 45.79W) George Town

Tuesday, February 22nd

Went into town early with the expectation of getting Regatta T-shirts and some bread from Mom's, but the shirts were not on sale today, and the bread wasn't ready yet. Ended up walking around. We stopped by the Tourist Bureau and met folks from Canada (*Marilyn & Stuart, aboard Union Jack*) who are officials of the regatta. The three of us volunteered to sell Official T-shirts on Thursday morning at the booth near the market.



Lee lead us on a walk out of town to Coconut Point. When he was here 10 years ago he picked up a couple coconuts that had sprouted and took them home. They are now coconut palms on the side of his garage. The resort was in failure when he was here last time, but it was now abandoned. A shame, because it looked like it had a lot of potential.



Doc served us drinks by the pool at nice Peace and Plenty, a beautiful hotel on the water that is cruiser friendly.



I picked up \$400 more from the bank in the box, and we went off to Eddies for lunch. I had curry chicken, the special of the day. The other guys had cracked conch, and grouper fingers...very good!



Back to the boat. Craig went kayaking and all of us snorkeled around the boat and then got cleaned up. Salt water soap works good! Cocktails on the poop-deck, sandwiches for dinner after our big lunch. It's an unusually beautiful night...almost no wind, cloudless sky, crystal clear water. Early to bed.

DAY TWENTY ONE (23 30.28 N 75 45.79W) George Town

Wednesday, February 23rd

Slept in (as usual, when I can). Craig was off kayaking at the crack of dawn. Lee and I took the dingy down to Crab Cay after coffee and cereal for breakfast. Since he was here last time someone has bought the whole Cay and built a magnificent bridge from the maintain land. We'll have to ask around town about what's going on. Lee says there's some interesting ruins of a plantation on the Cay, but they are no longer open to the public.

We moved the Brigadoon to a small coral reef and went snorkeling. It wasn't the best snorkeling I've seen. Afterwards we headed over to Stocking Island and the Chat 'N' Chill for beers and some fresh conch salad. And I mean



fresh... The live conchs were in the water at the shoreline. The guy walked into the water, picked up a few, got the critters out, and chopped them up for our salad. Very tasty.



Then we headed back to Kidds Cove near George Town and anchored. Spent a couple hours cleaning up the boat. Big dinner party tonight. Ted and his son Adam are coming over for spaghetti. Turned out to be a good party. Everybody had fun, but I forgot to take pictures.

DAY TWENTY TWO (23 30.28 N 75 45.79W) George Town

Thursday, February 24th

Every morning at 8am is the Cruisers Net on VHF channel 72. The cruisers are a community, and this is like a community bulletin board. This morning we made an announcement that the three guys aboard the Brigadoon II would be selling Regatta T-shirts in George Town. So that's what we did till noon, selling \$288 worth. This is a fund raiser to cover some of the regatta expenses.



Afterwards we did some shopping, including a case of Klicks (24 for \$44), got water and headed back to the boat. Looked for, but couldn't find the peanut man, who is said to sell peanuts across from the customs building. Pulled anchor and headed back to Stocking Island where we anchored just off the Chat 'N' Chill, an easy dingy ride to the beach. There's 250+ boats in the anchorage, down from the boom years with 400-500 boats. Still pretty



impressive sight! Some of these folks, like our Canadian friends Marilyn and Spencer (*Union Jack*), live on these boats year round. They have been doing this for 10 years. They summer in Vera Beach, FL, at a marina, and winter further south, like here at George Town.

Spent a quite afternoon reading and relaxing. Craig went for a swim. Simple dinner of Chili and Mom's bread. Our provisions are holding up very well. We'll be eating more and more canned stuff as we move ahead. Early to bed.

DAY TWENTY THREE (23 30.28 N 75 45.79W) George Town

Friday, February 25th

Woke up just in time for the 8am Cruisers Net Broadcast. This is very informative, with community announcements, lost and found, boat & motor problems, 4 sale items, and usually lasts about 45 minutes to an hour. I was pleased to hear Spenser announce that the 3 Guys on Brigadoon II did a great job selling T-shirts yesterday. There is also have a Children's Net called "Kids for Sail" that starts at 9am, since a lot of Cruisers are family affairs. Pets also abound...cats and dogs, ferrets, whatever. We are currently anchored next to the Hairball, a catamaran. Wonder what kind of pets they have? <smile>



Dingied over to Winstar 4 and registered for the Advanced Weather Seminar Sunday morning at 10:30 by Chris Parker, the renowned weather guru on the radio each morning. Winstar is leaving early and sold us an 18 pack of Natural Ice beer for \$18...a steal in these parts. Came across Craig who was out in his inflatable kayak. Offered him a breakfast beer, but he declined.

French Toast and Spam at 10:30am for brunch. Craig swam to the



beach, and Lee and I took the dingy in around 1:30pm. Watched Volley ball and sipped clicks for a while. Found Craig. Ted and Adam (s/v Ragtime) showed up, just back from hiking to the monument., so more beers were ordered. They've been invited to a happy hour tonight aboard a friend's boat.



Back on the Brigadoon we grilled some steaks and served them with corn and mashed potatoes & gravy. A pig out, but I forgot to take pictures again...

Then off to Sand Dollar Beach for a little beach party, and back to the boat in the dark. What a sight to see at night. 260+ boats at anchor with anchor lights on (well, at least most of them...some are completely dark...scary!)

DAY TWENTY FOUR (23 30.28 N 75 45.79W) George Town

Saturday, February 26th



Every morning Lee fires up the radio. Lee has a Ham license. His call sign is KJ4REK (Kilo-Julio-Four-Romeo-Echo-Kilo). He logs on to the Marine Net, 14.300MHZ, and reports our position and plans. This is a good thing should we ever disappear! Then he logs on to the Spiderweb Net, 14.347MHZ, which is a SSB channel controlled out of Bogota, Columbia. Jim Carrender at HK3AVR and several guys on Marco monitor this channel, and Dottie knows to contact them if needed.

Before we left we registered with US Customs and filed a float plan. This not only establishes our overall plan, but will facilitate our re-entry to the US the end of March.

Lee also downloads Weather faxes (maps) from NOAA on the Single Side Band radio. He usually connects to New Orleans, which provides the best connection. We can get weather maps that cover current conditions, plus 24, 48 and 72 hour forecasts. See Appendix II for a sample.

We use a computer program called Airmail2 to transmit and receive emails on Windlink over SSB radio. Windlink is a free service to HAM's provided by the US government. The emails have to be very small in size, with no attachments or embedded pictures, and you have to be in our address book in order for us to receive your email. We can post a message aboard the Brigadoon at any time, but it only gets sent when we can log on to Halifax, or one of the other stations.

Lee also monitors Chris Parker, the weather guru on 4.045MHZ upper side band at 6:30AM, long before I ever get up...ah, these cheerful morning people!

I picked up a coffee cup that says "Grumpy Till I Get My Coffee". I'm now a full blown caffeine addict, and will probably need a stay in the Betty Ford Clinic for detox when I get back. 63 years without drinking coffee, and it's come to this! This isn't even regular coffee...it's Lee's Navy coffee that will support a spoon. My Dad told me that if I ever joined the Navy not to let on that I didn't drink coffee...he said that might result in a dishonorable discharge!

Craig was out and about in his inflatable kayak early this morning. Lunch was Chicken Gumbo over Ramen Noodles. Tasty!



We went hiking on the Sound side this afternoon. Beautiful beach. Then stopped by St Francis Yacht Club for beers. It was pretty slow, so off to Chat 'N' Chill for more drinks and to buy T-shirts, while Craig swam to the boat. Socialized with the cruisers and back to



the boat for a light dinner.

DAY TWENTY FIVE (23 30.28 N 75 45.79W) George Town

Sunday, February 27th

I should note that this journal is a composite of observations by Lee and myself. Lee and I take the pictures, I crop and enhance them and type up the story, Lee reads and comments on it, and I incorporate his comments. Craig has shown no interest in participating, and does not want to proof read the journal, so his observations are not represented here.



Chris Parker weather seminar this morning at St Frances Yacht Club. Were gonna miss church on the beach this morning...I'm disappointed!

The weather lecture lasted about 1.5 hours, and was quite interesting. We bought a autographed copy of Chris's book,



Coastal and Offshore Weather, the Essential Handbook, by Chris Parker, sloop “*Bel Ami*” for the Brigadoon. You get a different perspective on weather when on a sailboat and dependent on wind for propulsion.



After the lecture it was back to the Chat 'N' Chill for beers and lunch. Today is the weekly pig roast. (notice the pig tail in the picture...this is the real piggy!) Craig opted out, and ordered a cheeseburger, but the order somehow got screwed up and by the time he got it Lee and I had long since made piggies out of ourselves.



Spent the afternoon enjoying Volley Ball Beach, chatting with cruisers and watching volley ball. Craig swam



back to the boat. These boat kids are interesting. While we were having snacks on the boat this little kid sailed by in a kayak... definitely a cruiser in training!

DAY TWENTY SIX (23 30.28 N 75 45.79W) George Town

Monday, February 28th

Regatta registration day, at last!

Well, we are about half way through our adventure and there has not been a mutiny, keel-hauling (perhaps because we lack a conventional keel, being a catamaran?) or mysterious disappearances, so I guess we'll make it. Actually, things are ahead of expectation, at least for me.



Craig kayaked into volley ball beach to do the yoga class this morning, and Lee and I followed along a bit later in the dingy. This may not be the best picture of Craig?

The Chat 'N Chill was having problem. The generator guy was on island time and had not showed up by noon, so they had no power, resulting in warm beer and no food...very bad for a restaurant! Kindle kindly referred to the guy as a 'knuckle head in a slow boat'. One of the cruisers had to go get their Honda 2000 generator off their boat to run the PA at registration day. These Honda generators are clearly the generator of choice They are everywhere...glad I brought mine! We have used it a

number of times to charge the batteries. When at anchor we only have the wind generator and the solar panels to keep the batteries up. Same thing when under sail.

Even under these trying conditions Kindle, our bartender was cheerful and hard at work selling warm beers to the thirsty cruisers. I chose to drink Strong Back Stouts, SBS, (a Bahamian Guinness taste-alike @ \$4 a pop), since I prefer them not too cold anyway.

We signed up for the dingy coconut harvest and the kayak race. We may leave before the kayak race next Monday, if we get a weather window. More on this later.

This is the last day for the Logo Contest for next years T-shirt design. Here's the one I voted for, #4. The other guys voted for different ones. Maybe I'll be back next year to see who won?



The early afternoon was well spent with a weather lecture by Chris Parker on the beach, preceded by an impromptu group that had written a song about the legendary weatherman. This guy has really found his notch. You can listen to him for free, but if you pay him to be a member you can talk to him and get personal forecasts geared precicely to your itinerary. It would be worth a couple hundred bucks if you were

a serious cruiser.



Margo and Kindle served me a cheeseburger & warm SBS at the Chat 'N' Chill for lunch. Couple of really nice folks.

Craig kayaked and we dingied back to the Brigadoon for a relaxing afternoon, supper of canned chicken, beans and stewed tomatoes. Early to bed. I read till midnight as usual. I'm now on my 4th book, actually less than I thought I would read. My KINDLE has over 100 books stored in it, so I won't run out. I highly recommend the Kindle. One of the finer pieces if engineering I have seen, and, being an engineer, I'm pretty critical. This one has WiFi and 3G net capability, for life, no monthly charges. So far on this trip it has been able to connect every time I turn it on. That's really all you have to do, just turn it on...no login protocol or bull at all (Bill Gates, are you listening?). You can then go to the Kindle Store on Amazon.com and download all the books you want. Not sure youre going to like it, or maybe you have read it before? Just download the free preview and give it a try.

DAY TWENTY SEVEN (23 30.28 N 75 45.79W) George Town

Tuesday, March 1st

Slept in to 8:30am this morning. We've settled in to a pattern while at anchor in the George Town harbor. Craig's up at dawn, or before, and goes kayaking. Lee get's up some time after that and works the radios (see story under day 24). I sleep in as long as I can. Once I get up I dismantle Craig's bunk and stow it on my bed for the day. Then we download and answer email. I process pictures, update the Journal, and then do backups.

Oatmeal for my breakfast. Craig ate the left over spaghetti.



Off to volley ball beach and the dingy parade. If we do this again we have to plan ahead and bring some cool stuff for our dingy. As it was we were just spectators. After the parade there was a dingy Poker Run. If you are



not familiar with that, each boat has a list of places to go where they pick up a playing card. At the end of the event the best poker hand wins. Because time and speed are not factors these are usually pretty safe. However a friend of mine, Kevin sellers, was killed when his go-fast boat flipped during a Poker Run on a lake in Tennessee.

Good party in the evening. Band played on the Chay 'N' Chill deck.

DAY TWENTY EIGHT (23 30.28 N 75 45.79W) George Town

Wednesday, March 2nd

Woke up (at 8:30) to yet another beautiful day. Flat seas and sunny, but a big front is coming, with up to 30 knot winds. So, Lee and I took off to George Town to provision and get water. Dumped the trash, got groceries at the Exuma Market , and picked up another bottle of Scotch. We think the bottle we got in Staniel Cay must have developed a leak...<smile>

George Town provides free water. Apparently other folks had the same idea, with the storm coming. The Dingy Dock was a zoo, especially around the water hose. Back to Brigadoon to drop things off, and I returned in the dingy to get 2 more jugs of water. We are now almost full up...one 30 gal tank, one 50 gal tank and two 5 gal portable tanks.

The front arrived, with wind and some rain. We went ashore for the 3:30pm Pet Parade, but it ended up being rained out.

Big party at the Chat 'N' Chill, hosted by the Indian Town Marina Marina. Free food and drinks. Good time inspite of the rain.

DAY TWENTY NINE (23 30.28 N 75 45.79W) George Town

Thursday, March 3rd

Very windy. Same forecast for the next few days. Well probably be here through the weekend. Today's the coconut harvest. Hundreds of coconuts are released from several dingies in a protected cove called hole one behind Chat 'N' Chill. Contestants remove their motors and oars from their dingies and paddle with fins, one fin to a person, 4 people per dingy. Harriet from Maine made up our 4th.



Some of the cruisers go all out for this event, with costumes and all. We did pretty well, collecting 42 coconuts



and finishing about in the middle of the pack. After the harvest there are some coconut tossing games on the beach for additional points and then the awards ceremony, with bottles of wine and rum for the winners.



Back to the boat for a quiet afternoon, relaxing and reading.

DAY THIRTY (23 30.28 N 75 45.79W) George Town

Friday, March 4th

"The weather's always fine, for the sailor who has the time" says Chris Parker.

This morning we cleaned up the boat and pulled anchor, bound for Lee Stocking Island, about 25 Nautical miles away. A strong wind was blowing N-NE which would put it off our starboard beam the whole way. Even Elizabeth Harbor had white caps, but when we saw the breakers on the rocks near the channel we held a quick conference and called it for the day. We have the time... We anchored at Monument Beach between Hamburger Beach and Volley Ball Beach for the night.



Raised Ted aboard the sailing vessel *Ragtime* and invited him for lunch. His girl friend is arriving tonight in George Town for 17 days. Weather should be improving. We hope to get out here tomorrow. We did



hamburgers on the grill and baked beans.

Relaxed on the boat this afternoon. I finished my 4th book and started my 5th.

DAY THIRTY ONE (23 30.28 N 75 45.79W) George Town

Saturday, March 5th



Up at 7am, pulled anchor and set sail. Got as far as the channel, but turned back. Rolling surf coming from the sound, breaking on the rocks and snotty wind still E-NE. It was the right decision.

Climbed the monument mountain again and walked the beach. Encountered a nice Canadian couple hiking. They started tell me about seeing this crazy boat trying to get out the pass that morning...I told 'em "that would be us"! Stopped by Hamburger Beach for a couple cold

Sands lights from Alvyn on the way back.

Lunch on the boat and another afternoon lying around. Tension is mounting among the crew. We are getting a bit short tempered and crabby. It's time to be on our way. We have about 500 miles to go, and want enough time to do some stuff on the way back. Craig has a plane to catch on the 31st.

It's now 4pm and the wind is still howling.

Lee and I took the dingy in search of Ted and *Ragtime*. Pulled up along side and found Ted and his lovely girlfriend Gail having happy hour, so we joined them. After a while we hailed Craig on the radio, and I went to pick him up from the Brigadoon. Spent a pleasant evening aboard *Ragtime*. Ted's boat is a 30 foot mono-hull...very nice and comfortable. He's had this boat for 20 years, and keeps it in Florida over the summer at a Marina. Gail's here cruising with Ted for 17 days, flying out of Nassau, so we'll stay in touch via radio and email and perhaps cross paths again.

Tomorrow we will try once again to get out of George Town and begin the long 500+ mile trip home to Marco.

END OF PART I



THE BAHAMA JOURNAL
THREE GUYS AND A BOAT
A SAILING ODYSSEY
Capt. Lee Henderson, Mates Ed Crane & Craig Letho
February and March, 2011

recorded by Ed Crane



PART II
The Journey Home

DAY THIRTY TWO (23 30.28 N 75 45.79W) George Town

Sunday, March 6th

The wind laid down last night around 4AM, so we got up early and headed for Lee Stocking Island, about 20 NM's away. There was a mass exodus from George Town. Apparently a lot of boats had been waiting for the weather to change.

Nice sail. Huge ocean swells, but with a long period, and no white caps, so the ride was OK. We pretty much had the wind, what there was of it, on our stern.



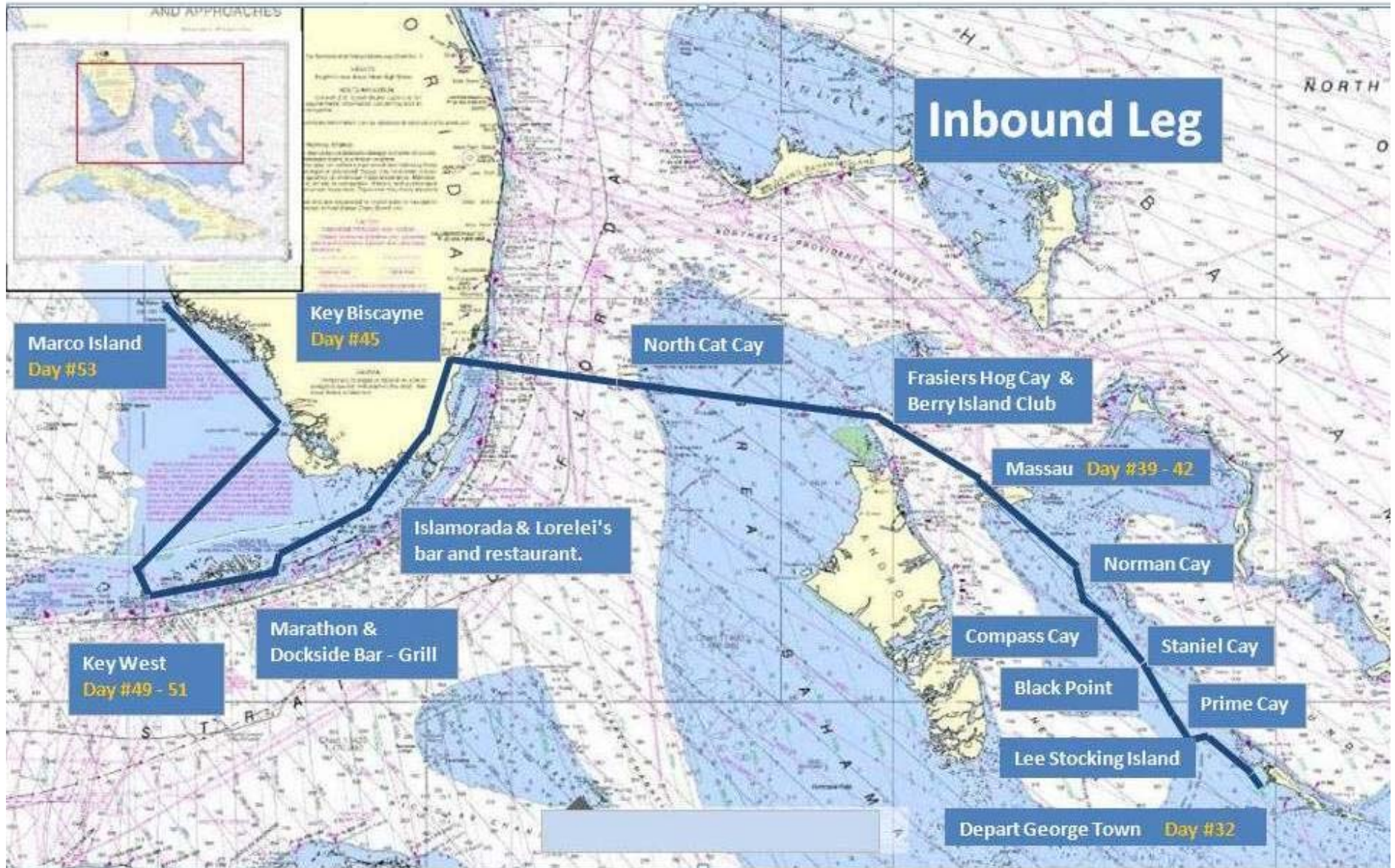
Things got exciting as we approached the cut at Lee Stocking Island. The tide was racing out at 2-3 knots and the heavy sea was pushing in, making for very rough conditions. Waves were crashing on the rocks on either side of the cut. At one point I spotted a dark mass a few degrees to Port off the bow. Oh Shit!...a coral head, I wondered?? I gave the alarm. We all looked, scared at first, but then noticed it was floating. As we got closer it turned out to be a huge sea turtle who smiled at us as he passed by. This was certainly a two underwear event. Good thing we'll be at the Black Point laundry in a couple days!



Lee and I went ashore and chatted with the guy who runs the Research center. Not much going on. He told us about a 60foot sailboat that didn't make the cut recently and was totally destroyed on the rocks. The people made it to shore in their dingy and were evacuated by air several days later. Within 2 days the boat was ground up into little pieces and disappeared.

Brigadoon II Bahamas Cruise – February & March 2011

Crew: Lee Henderson, Ed Crane, and Craig Lehto



We hiked over to the Sound side. Not much to see, but a nice beach, although it had a lot of junk washed up on it. Someone had made a creature out of the junk.



DAY THIRTY THREE (23 46.29N 76 06.33W) Lee Stocking Island

Monday, March 7th

Departed for a short motor to Prime Cay and a snorkeling place Lee is fond of. Nice quiet place. Craig really liked it...no bars, no boats, no people expecting you to talk to them! ...Nirvana!

As it turns out several of these islands are private, I suspect owned by Americans or foreigners. It's sad to see the Bahamians selling their country to the highest bidder. But then, we have sold our country to the Chinese...so we're not so smart either! Craig's thinking of buying an island for himself...



We snorkeled some. Crystal clear water, and some interesting structure. Found a nice conch shell that we will make into a conch horn.



Took the dingy over to an adjacent island where there is a large construction project underway. One end of the island was a forest of coconut palms, planted 10 years ago, we later learned. The place looked like it might be a major resort. Turns out it is a private residence for some California Electrical Supply Tycoon. The money some people have! As we got out of the dingy one of the workers came over...we figured we were going to get the bum's rush, but Rodney, the general foreman, turned



out to be quite friendly and filled us in on what was going on. After intros and a photo session he asked if we might be able to spare a few cold Klicks. He was very brand specific...none of that crappy American beer for him, I guess! So, we got the cooks tour of the construction site and met Mark and Josie who seemed to be in charge of the construction. They noted that the owner expected to rent the place out for \$100,000 per week. Maybe we'll stay there next time...I wonder if they will rent by the



minute?? We could afford a few minutes if we pooled our money. <LOL>

This is going to be quite a place. They are carving out a hole in a hill of limestone. The plan is to pretty much bury the house in the hillside. See the guy in the blow up? This is quite an excavation project

We tracked down a gas smell to a leaky carburetor. Lee, who always thinks ahead, had a brand new spare, so we changed it out, and the motor now runs fine with no leak. Figure we pumped about \$50 worth of gas into the Ocean...

DAY THIRTY FOUR (23 49.27N 76 11.45W) Prime Cay

Tuesday, March 8th

Departed early for Black Point, and the laundromat. We haven't done laundry since the last time we were here. Even I have a large bag this time. Good thing they've got lots of machines. Motored much of the way because we're following the winding channel up the leeward side of the Exumas. We've had enough of the rough Sound for a while. Lots of interesting scenery along the way.



Arrived in Black Point mid afternoon, just in time for happy hour at Scorpios bar and restaurant. This was one of the best happy hours so far with 2 Klicks for \$5, awesome, killer rum punch for \$3.50, and free munchies, including wings and meatballs. They do this every Tuesday and Friday.



Then off to dinner at Deshamon's for a nice fish dinner, the same place we previously had dinner with Ted.

Dark windy night.,,not good for little dingies with 3 people in them. Had trouble finding our boat in the harbor, even with our anchor light on. You'd be surprised how confusing it can be.

DAY THIRTY FIVE (23 49.27N 76 11.45W) Prime Cay

Wednesday, March 9th

Laundry and water day.

Black Point has free water for cruisers. The Brigadoon has 2 water tanks. So far we have operated off the 30 gallon tank and have not touched the 50 gallon tank. What frugal sailors we are!



If you are ever in the Exuma's don't miss Black Point. It's a very nice, friendly community. Some of the features are:

- Free fresh water, close to the government dock.
- Restaurants and bars
- A huge laundromat with a view and a dingy dock.
- Free WiFi in several places
- Happy Hour at the Scorpio
- A nice grocery store.

We loaded up the dingy with the laundry and set out for the Rockside, the only Laundry with a dingy dock and a view! It took us 5 washing machines...we were pretty dirty!



At the laundromat we ran into Ted and Gail, of *Ragtime II*, who had arrived last night from George Town. They stopped by the Brigadoon later in the afternoon for an early happy hour of rum and diet coke, and snacks. We sure enjoy their company. Maybe we can get them down to Marco some day? They are headed for Nassau, same as us, so we'll probably meet up with them again. We'll swap email addresses so we can stay in touch.

Ted & Gail took off to dinner at Lorraine's.

While we were securing the dingy some locals came by with some lobster (lungusta) tails. We settled on \$30 for 3 tails. Two of them were quite large, the biggest I have seen in quite a while. And I have a license to harvest these in the Keys. I processed them and par-boiled them for 6 minutes, then finished them off on the BBQ. That was dinner...very tasty. But as usual, I forgot to take a picture...

Early to bed. I read until 1AM and will pay a big price for that tomorrow! Bummer.

DAY THIRTY SIX (24 05.99N 76 24.16W) Black Point

Thursday, March 10th



A couple days ago I found a very nice live conch while snorkeling at Prime Cay, and since then I've been doing a low impact conch extraction to remove the critter without damaging the shell. No pictures of that...the process may offend the tree huggers and vegetarians among my readers! The plan is to make a new conch (konk) horn for the Brigadoon. I finished up this morning and put the shell in the dingy. Tonight we'll give it the smell test. If I was successful it will be fine. If not it will be stinky and we'll need to add some Clorox to freshen it up...but a fine horn it will be, either way.

Got under way about 8:30AM, bound for Staniel Cay and refueling. Light wind, calm seas, beautiful day, as usual. Refueled and headed out to Compass Cay, a favorite anchorage of Lee's. Anchored up

and used 2 anchors, for the first time this trip. No other boats in site.

Checked in with *Ragtime*, but Ted & Gail were anchoring on the next Cay up. Later, on the radio, we heard they were invited over for Cornish Hens and fixin's on another boat, so I don't blame them. I told Craig to go look in our freezer to see if we had any Cornish hens left, but he sadly reminded me that we don't even have a freezer!

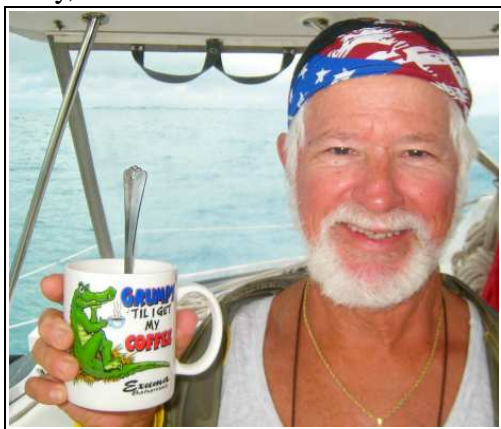
In the afternoon we explored what looked like a tidal area. As we got to the other end we could see the waves crashing over the cut and filling the lagoon...way cool

Back to the boat for a spartan meal, and to bed early. I was asleep by 9:30PM, after my 1AM reading extravaganza last night. On my 6th book now. Another Jack Reacher novel.



DAY THIRTY SEVEN (24 16.63N 76 31.53W) Compass Cay

Friday, March 11th



Up early at 7AM. Fortunately for me, the Capt'n had brewed up a pot of high test Navy coffee in the French Press. A spoon really does stand up in this stuff, but it sure lights up the morning! I gotta get me one of these French presses...now that I'm addicted to caffeine.

Pulled our 2 anchors, with some effort since they had gotten wrapped up during the night, and then we headed out the pass. The weather is, as Ted would say, *SNOTTY*. Wind on the nose out of the north, raining, and a front passing through. After an on-board strategy session, we ended up coming back to the Compass Cay *Stinkpot*

Marina for the day and night. Nice little marina. They feed the sharks here, so Craig was all excited about swimming with them. Lee and I will take the pictures...<smile> Only one other sailboat in the marina...all the rest are power boats.



I fixed Bloody Mary's and Lee cooked a world class breakfast of Spam, fried eggs, and toast. As you might expect, there were multiple rounds of Bloody Mary's, except for Craig, who went to the book swap. Fortunately, as quartermaster, I had all the BM fixin's...V8, celery salt, Worcestershire sauce and fresh ground coarse cut horse radish. ...and, of course, we always have Vodka.

Craig and I were pretty impressed with the Capt'n's culinary skills. We weren't convinced that he even knew where the galley was...<smile>



Job for the afternoon is to defrost the frig. It's all iced up. Too much humidity in these parts.

Just got an SOS (instead of the correct Mayday) call on channel 16. Seems someone from motor vessel *Sea Dog* was out on *Sea Pup*, their "dingy", and



fell on the rocks. Rocks here are razor sharp coral and limestone, and highly infectious. Cindy once ended up in the emergency room over a scraped knee in Barbados. The Brigadoon advised that Craig is a Physician Assistant (PA) and will stand by the radio to help. *Sea Dog* is docked across from us in the marina.



Update: The girl was hurt pretty badly. Face lacerations that needed stitching, a broken wrist, and other cuts. Craig dipped into our medical supplies and was the *HERO OF THE DAY!!* He went over to the *SEA DOG*, and was gone all afternoon sewing her up and working her other injuries, and then went back several times to check on her, and medicate her, with our supplies. They hope to airlift her out tomorrow to the US.

I asked Craig to comment on the event, but he's very humble. Says he's just doing his job. You could say that, in-spite of the injury, this was that ladies lucky day! We are in a third world country after all.



Follow up: Lee and I were a bit disappointed in the *Sea Dog* folks. They showed very little appreciation for the effort Craig put in taking care of their injured friend. Barely a thank you. Not even a bottle of wine. Lee says this is typical of *Stink Potters...*

Lee made an 'artifact' from a



piece of wood we picked up on the beach. He hung it up on the approach to the marina with the other memorabilia. Maybe someday he'll will get back here and see if it's still there...? It's on the left hand side of the paved road as you walk toward the Marina, near the top of the hill, in case you are ever there.

The 3 of us walked over to the sound side. A really nice crescent beach, but I still prefer Marco's beach. Our tourist magazines (with spin from the politicians and real estate folks, of course) claim that Marco's beach is the best and most unique crescent beach in all of North America...but who would know, for sure??

We saw this awesome ruin off in the distance, high on a cliff overlooking the ocean. Once upon a time it must have been a cool place, with an incredible view, but I guess a hurricane got it?



Low key dinner tonight of chili and dogs with asparagus on the side...most excellent! The 3 of us are incredibly compatible

about eating...we will eat almost anything. This is a huge relief for me after years in New England where "Spices" meant salt and pepper!



DAY THIRTY EIGHT (24 15.64N 76 30.75W) Compass Cay

Saturday, March 12th

Plan to leave Compass Cay Marina this morning. Wind still not right, but expect it to improve as the day goes on. Craig's off doing his morning kayak trip. He's certainly getting his money's worth!

Had a nice sail to Norman's Cay. Anchored up and headed for MacDuff's bar and grill. Our friend Kelly took good care of us. We opted for the \$22 steak dinner special, and were pleasantly surprised. The steaks far exceeded our expectations and were quite large, about 1.5" thick. Good time. Back for to the boat for cigars and sleep.

Bound for Nassau tomorrow.

DAY THIRTY NINE (24 15.64N 76 30.75W) Norman's Cay

Sunday, March 13th

It's Home Schooling Day for Craig and I.

We are in complete charge of the boat. Lee says he will only intervene if we are in mortal danger.

Craig and I poured over the charts and programmed a route into the GPS. Set the older GPS for the

Nassau light as a backup. Hauled anchor, raised and set the sails, and navigated to Nassau, some 35 miles away. We did good, and arrived in a timely fashion in one piece, after an exciting, but uneventful trip. I think we passed the test.

Craig and I have decided to go in on a boat together and circumnavigate the globe...now that we have the hang of it. <smile> First though, we're thinking of doing a little commercial boating to get the hang of it. We been looking at some local fixer uppers, like this one...



Anchored up in Nassau harbor. Happy hour for Lee and I. Craig went kayaking. We all had a nice dinner on board., then early to bed. Tomorrow we'll dock at the Nassau Yacht Haven for a couple days of R & R.

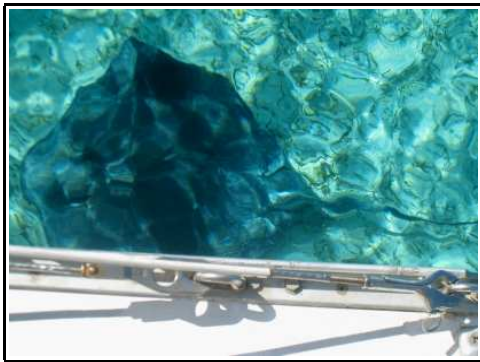
DAY FORTY (25 04.54N 77 19.01W) Nassau

Monday, March 14th

A beautiful day in Paradise, as usual. Bloody Mary's and hard boiled eggs for breakfast, prepared by Lee. And of course, lots of that Navy coffee.



It's Marina day! Yea, real showers! It's been 34 days since I've had a hot freshwater shower! My routine has been to jump off the stern to get wet, lather up with Sea-Soap (saltwater soap), and jump back in to rinse off. Sometimes I use the sun shower for a quick fresh water rinse, but fresh water is precious. Once I almost landed on a 5 foot Barracuda, and we've also had to shoo away the sting rays a few times. Ever since that ray got the crocodile man I've shown these things more respect! Craig swam over the top of a giant ray a few days ago while swimming in shallow water. He said it was about the size of our dingy...



Boat clean up day, while tied up in the Marina. It's hard to believe 3 guys could make such a mess, but the boat is a pig sty... We cleaned everything, top to bottom, bow to stern, then went grocery shopping. The store is a few blocks away. Made a 2nd trip to pick up Scotch, Rum and Sands light beer.

We headed for the Poop Deck restaurant here at the marina with the intention of having happy hour and then dinner. The place was packed, with a long line, so we just did happy hour and then back to the boat for a light dinner. Started up the generator and made some popcorn in the microwave for the first time this trip. Should have thought of this earlier.

DAY FORTY ONE (25 04.54N 77 19.01W) Nassau

Tuesday, March 15th

Off to downtown Nassau today. Dottie emailed us the recipe for her tuna dish, so we need to pick up some green stuffed olives things. We have everything else.

Nice time walking around Nassau. Did a little trinket shopping, had a couple beers, and a late lunch of conch salad and conch fritters under the bridge at our favorite place, *Tony's under the bridge*.

Since we were here 5 weeks ago a block of downtown Nassau burned down. All of it is east of the Bacardi building near the Cruise ship terminal. Demolition is underway.



Craig's getting into this tourist stuff. That's him in the picture.

Spaghetti for dinner tonight, aboard the *Brigadoon*. Outbound for Chub Cay in the morning.



Wandered around under the bridge looking at the vendors. They had some nice looking land crabs in a cage for sale...probably

good with spaghetti, but I couldn't get the guys interested...



DAY FORTY TWO (25 04.54N 77 19.01W) Nassau
 Wednesday, March 16th

Quote of the day "*If brute force doesn't work, you are not using enough*"

Up at the crack of dawn, gassed up, and headed out for the Berry Island Yacht Club on Frazer's Hog Cay (Chub Cay). Don, who now is the dock master in Goodland, used to own it.



Four cruise ships in port today. I tried to get a picture of the fire damage, but it was pretty far away. The damaged extends from the pink building on the right to the far left end of the yellow building. Note the



missing roof on the yellow building. The whole area will have to be demolished. A good opportunity for some needed urban renewal, if Nassau does the right thing. A great location for development, right next to the Cruise Ship Dock.



Slow going today. Motor sailing due to lack of wind. Called the Berry Island Club and made reservations for dinner...blackened grouper. Arrived late afternoon and picked up a mooring ball for \$25.



Went ashore around 5pm and had clicks at the bar, which wasn't actually open yet. We are the only bar/dinner customers...this is a pretty small operation. While eating our blackened grouper (very tasty) this local guy Donald McNealy came in for a Guinness. As it turns out Donald has been here a long time, especially after his sailboat sank in a storm and the wife said 'no more sailboats'. Donald knows Don, a previous owner, now dock master at Goodland, and also Ted, Sarah and Patches of the motor vessel *Manatee*, all friends of Lee's. It was quite an evening swapping stories...everyone (except Craig, the designated dingy driver) got a bit loaded. The staff had to



practically throw us out!

Got back to the Brigadoon OK and crashed. Off to cross the Banks tomorrow. Probably 2 days to get to Cat Cay, our jumping off place for crossing the Gulf Stream, which we will do in the daytime for a change!



DAY FORTY THREE (25 25.40N 77 50.14W) Berry Island Yacht Club, Frazer Cay

Thursday, March 17th



Up early (for me). The bridle and safety lines were all snarled up around the mooring ball. Craig and I struggled to free everything, and we got underway, motoring across the Bahama Bank toward Cat Cay and the Gulf Stream. We'll anchor somewhere tonight on the Bank, and the to Cat Cay tomorrow. In 3 days or so we could be back in Florida, weather permitting. Target is to arrive in Marco no later than March 29 so Craig can catch his flight and get back to work. We need somebody to keep paying into social security!

We have now traveled 711 NM (818 miles, 1,317 KM)

I read till 1 AM again last night, and was awake by 6 AM...I really have to stop doing that! I pay too big a price the next day. It leaves me lethargic all day.



While in Nassau I bought a new Panama Jack hat. It's very comfortable, fits well, is ventilated and makes me look cool, don't ya think?

There's a bit of stress among the crew, perhaps partly due to the fact that we have accomplished most of what we set out to do and now have a fairly long, and possibly uneventful, trip back home. The three of us have been attached at the hip for 43 days in a fairly confined space. Craig and I clearly are not knowledgeable sailors, and don't know the Brigadoon like Lee does, but the Capt'n is sometimes overly critical and runs around behind us un-doing and re-doing things that we do. I find that frustrating and dis-empowering and tend to sit back and withdraw from making decisions. I don't like to be wrong. I don't have a lot of experience with that <LOL>. Craig's reaction is to be very quiet and distant at times, even more than usual.

There's practically no wind today and it's hot. We continue to motor over the Bahama Bank at about 5 knots. The world is a big place at 5-7 knots!! I took a much needed nap.

Wind came up later and we were able to sail. We'd planned to anchor on the bank for the night and do this trip in 2 days, but with the wind it was too rough to anchor, so we kept going and made Cat Cay about 11 PM. Tied up at the Cat Cay Yacht Club, and went to sleep...3 tired sailors. Got up early before the marina opened, and motored away...saving \$100 slip fee! That helps to offset the screwing we got when we checked in here at customs last month!

DAY FORTY FOUR (25 33.90N 79 16.60W) Cat Cay, the Bahamas

Friday, March 18th

We had planned to stay at Cat Cay for the day, but the weather was favorable for a Gulf Stream crossing, so we motored through the cut about 8AM, later than we should be, and set sail for Florida. We are way ahead of schedule and may spend some time cruising the keys and stop at Key West. Yea! Great bars! Schooner Wharf, Capt Tony's, here we come.



No time for coffee or breakfast this morning (yet)...bummer. Update: the Capt'n brewed a pot and we had some fruit and breakfast bars while under way.

It was an ideal day for the crossing. The wind was strong and out of the E-NE. Seas were rough, with large ocean swells, but probably average for the 'Stream.

Much of the time we were on an angle with the giant ocean rollers. The Brigadoon rolled and bounced quite a bit, but overall it was a nice ride. We motored sailed most of the way, and finished up the trip, sailing into Biscayne Bay late afternoon. The skyline of Miami sure looked good to 3 weary and smelly sailors! We're glad to back in the States ahead of schedule. Bad weather could have trapped us at Cat Cay indefinitely. Anchored for the night. Craig went kayaking. We all took baths, and then grilled big fat burgers on the BBQ. Corn & greens beans in mushroom soup, on the side.



My 22' cocktail cruiser, Motor Vessel *Cheese Burger in Paradise*, would have had a lot of trouble with the seas today. I probably would have capsized on the tack the Brigadoon followed.

DAY FORTY FIVE (25 41.63N 80 10.55W) Biscayne Bay, Florida

Saturday, March 19th

Dead calm today... glad we made the crossing yesterday! Off to Islamorada (Spanish slang for Island Home, some say, and pronounced ees-la-mo-ra-da) and the Keys this morning.

We have now traveled 846 NM (974 statute miles, 1567 KM) on this trip. Since we left Nassau 170 NM ago (or 196 statute miles) we have burned 12 gallons of gas! That's 16 MPG, about what my SUV gets. The good ship *Cheese Burger in Paradise* burns about 15 gallons circumnavigating Marco Island in an afternoon.



Flew the Spinnaker for the first time this trip. Had to take it down later that afternoon, because the wind came up. Getting a spinnaker down when the wind is blowing is quite a challenge.

Craig is anxious to get back to Denver and may take the Key West shuttle back if he can get an earlier flight out of Ft Myers. Something about Mary Beth flying to the East Coast, and the dogs...I know he'll be disappointed if he misses all the great bars in Key West! <LOL>



Passed under the Card Sound Bridge and the new US 1 bridge. Anchored off Key Largo on the Gulf side, almost in front of Quiescence, the Dive company Al and I go with frequently. Fired up the generator and popped a couple bags of popcorn in the microwave. Light dinner.



DAY FORTY SIX (25 08.56N 80 24.15W) Blackwater Sound, Key Largo

Sunday, March 20th

Craig's kayaking over to Penny Camp on the Atlantic side. Today we are off to Islamorada.

Arrived early afternoon and had trouble getting a hook. Ended up using the alternate Port anchor, a 35 pound Bruce with 80 feet of stainless steel chain. Craig and I are not enthusiastic, because there is no windless on the Port side and we'll have to pull anchor manually tomorrow. Craig thrives on pain and suffering, so I nominated him to pull Bruce.



We are anchored just north of the Bass Pro Shop and the Islamorada Fish Company (MM84). We didn't know where to go, so Lee called Sahara (m/v *Manatee*). She told us about Lorelei's bar and restaurant. As it turns out, we were anchored right in front of it, but couldn't see the Bar because of a mangrove island.



Lee and I changed the oil in the engines, we all got cleaned up, and dingied to the bar around 4 PM. It was happy hour, with import drafts at \$1.75. We stayed for dinner...jerked chicken for me, grouper for the guys. I like this place. If you are ever traveling south on US1 it's a right-hand turn at Mile Marker 82.



Back to the Brigadoon and a nice sunset.

DAY FORTY SEVEN (25 55.28N 80 39.97W) Islamorada

Monday, March 21st

Rained last night. Wind is up this morning.

Craig and I pulled the Bruce and we set sail for Marathon, about 35 NM away. We decided we like Bruce and later today we'll swap anchors so that Bruce can have his very own windlass. Bruce probably would have done better in the Bahamas, where we occasionally had trouble getting a hook.



Really nice sail most of the way. Good wind right behind us. Sailed all day on just the Genoa.



Pulled into Marathon late afternoon, got gas and water, and then to the Dockside for happy hour and dinner. Excellent blackened dolphin.

The anchorage and marinas at Marathon were absolutely packed. Don't think I have ever seen so many boats in one place! Even at the regatta in George Town.

There was one dark moment today. Pulling into Marathon I was in command. The mission, simple: pull up to the fuel dock, secure, get gas and water. The conditions were perfect. Light wind on the bow, current on the bow, bright sun, sails down and motoring. I lined things up. Craig was on the port bow with a mooring line ready. I pushed the port bow toward the dock on a nice oblique angle. Then I slid the port engine control back to neutral and then into reverse to check our forward momentum...text book all the way, simple.

EXCEPT, the port engine didn't go into reverse. It just made a grinding noise and delivered zero reverse thrust. I cranked back on the starboard engine, but too late. So, we clunked into the dock. I was crushed. But at least the Brigadoon wasn't and was fine!

So, for now we have one engine that won't go into reverse. Not a show stopper but a pain.

Anchored away from all the boats, in sight of the 7 mile bridge.



DAY FORTY EIGHT (24 41.60N 81 07.05W) Marathon

Tuesday, March 22nd

Pulled Bruce and headed out for Key West, down Hawks Channel...zero wind, we may be motoring all the way. Forecast is for light wind for the next few days, not good for our return to Marco. I've done the 90 mile trip to and from Marco motoring before.

Lee is talking on the ham radio to a boat on it's way to the Galapagos Islands. My parents spent some time there during their 25 years of traveling the world. We should airlift all the crazy nuts who doubt Darwin's theory of evolution to this place for a refresher course in reality...

Just abeam of Stock Island, near Key West, we spun a prop on the starboard engine, our good engine. Probably happened because the old prop picked up a big chunk of surface weeds that offered too much resistance. For those not familiar, props have a slip joint built into them to protect the engine. When something tries to stop the prop the joint shears and the prop spins free. Great idea to protect the engine, but now you have to change the prop, not just replace a shear pin. Not easy at sea, on the Brigadoon. So, now we are below critical mass, with one completely useless engine, and one that won't go into reverse.

We detoured to the nearest marina, Oceanside on Stock Island, and tied up at the fuel dock. To cut to the chase, Lee and I went into the water under the boat. Craig managed the cockpit, and handed us tools. We replaced the prop with a spare, and later were able to fix the shift problem on the other engine as well. Two bolts on the cable bracket had vibrated completely out. I fished out one of them from the engine compartment, and Lee had a spare for the other one.

So we pulled out of the marina, with both engines now 100%, headed for Key West, and anchored just off the Galleon marina in Old Town.

I absolutely love Key West. I may be my most favorite place on the planet! As we pulled in, close to sunset, the sight seeing boats were out, folks packed on Mallory dock. I felt home! I lived here for 3 years in the 60's while in high school. Three memorable, formative years! Cindy and I came down in 1986, looking at prospective places to retire (we plan ahead). It was her first time in KW, and she fell in love as well. We would have picked KW, but logic prevailed. Plus we had one more place to check out...another tropical island called Marco Island, somewhere on the west coast on Florida. The rest is history. We did buy a time share at the Banyan before we left KW, within site of the house I used to live in, just to provide an anchor to this great place. It has provided us with 25 years of fond memories, perhaps one of our best investments.



Cindy and I will be back in 4 weeks. It's Conch Republic Days, celebrating the time in the 80's when KW succeeded from the Union, surrendered, and applied for foreign aid, all in the same day. You gotta love these people!

Dinner was steak on the BBQ and fixings. Craig made his beans in mushroom sauce. The steak came from Nassau, and beyond. I used Rob's headlight to cook the steaks. The guys have been impressed at how well equipped I am. I told 'em I owe it all to Rob. What a day!



This is Craig's last full day, and the LAST SUPPER! Tomorrow he boards the Key West Shuttle at 4 PM, returning to Marco, and his rescheduled flight back to Denver on the 26th. He's being very secretive, but apparently there is a personal problem causing him to abort the trip. Or maybe he has just had enough? It has been 48 days, and lots of miles.

DAY FORTY NINE (24 34.30N 81 48.09W) Key West

Wednesday, March 23rd

Beautiful day, but no wind. Same forecast for tomorrow and the next day, not good for our return trip.



I made ham and cheese omelets for breakfast. Craig loaded all his stuff into the dingy and the three of us headed for the ferry terminal next to Conch Harbor. We let Craig off and headed over to Schooner Wharf for beers and Micheal McCloud.

I was sipping my beer when someone taps me on the shoulder. It was Russel Laporte!! Russel and I have known each other for over 30 years.

He's a hedonist and party animal like me. We have had some memorable times together. This is his 20th winter in Key West. Tomorrow or the next day he hooks up his RV and heads for Maine, and back to his bride Susan.

DAY FIFTY (24 34.30N 81 48.09W) Key West

Thursday, March 24th

Another beautiful day, but no wind.

Took the dingy and went to Harpoon Harry's for breakfast. Excellent! Then walked around a bit, got some keys made, and back to the boat. Decided we didn't like where it was anchored, so moved across from the Galleon, near Christmas island. Much better anchorage.



Back into town in the afternoon. A couple of beers at Schooners, and walked to El Siboney's (corner of Catherine and Margaret) for great Cuban food. I had the Signature pork dish #1, as usual. Lee had the baked grouper. Both excellent! Price with beers was \$33. A great value.

El Siboney's has been serving outstanding Cuban food in Key West for nearly 30 years.

Beautiful sunset, with Sunset Key (formerly Tank Island) in the background. No wind forecast for tomorrow, but we hope to be on our way Saturday.



DAY FIFTY ONE (24 34.30N 81 48.09W) Key West

Friday, March 25th

Lazy morning. Flat calm. A guy hailed us from a dingy. Turns out Jim heard Lee on the Ham Spyder net, and knows Lee via Ted and Sarah. He's been to Lee's house in Marco. Jim and Roberta Heltzinger are moored in the Key West mooring field aboard sailing vessel *Chipper*. They sailed into Key West 3 years and 3 months ago on their way to the Bahamas, and are still here! Sorta like Micheal McCloud's song about how he just came down for the weekend, 35 years ago. Key West does that to people. I'm certainly hooked.

We sat on the poop deck drinking Bloody Mary's with Jim and reminiscing. Jim has been following our trip. Our adventure is being broadcast over the net and in email, forwarded by Jim on Marco Island. I guess we we are minor celebrities. When Lee logs on to the Ham net with *Kilo-Julio-Four-Romeo-Echo Kilo, Marine mobile*, folks from all over the world want to talk to us.

I cooked a Spam and cheese omelet with pancakes and Spam on the side, with lots of coffee. Yum.

We made a date with Jim to be picked up in his dingy at 3:30 PM. The 4 of us headed for a bar on Stock Island for happy hour. The bar, *The Hurricane Hole*, is off Cow Key channel just on the Atlantic side of Route 1. Met another couple, friends of theirs, from Canada. They have a power boat moored at Key West and have been to many of the places in the Bahamas we have visited.

As we were leaving, this guy who looked like a younger Mick Jagger, helped push us off and fell into the dingy with us. No harm done. Alcohol may be involved? This bar has a nice little harbor with several resident Manatee's.



DAY FIFTY TWO (24 34.30N 81 48.09W) Key West

Saturday, March 26th

We are finely getting under way out of Key West, bound for Everglades City, and on to Marco on Sunday. Still very little wind, but at least out of the right direction for a change. There a forecast it will pick up this afternoon.

Beautiful sail all day. Made up to 7.5 knots. We changed our destination to Little Shark River to accommodate the wind. This will give us further to go tomorrow, but a nice sail both days, with little motoring.

Anchored about sunset after a very long and uneventful sail. The Capt'n and I enjoyed a couple of drinks and some snacks on the Poop-Deck, killing the last of our Scotch. I fixed a huge pot of spaghetti. Finished off the evening with cigars.

Secured the cabin with mosquito nets, sprayed and turned in. Only saw a couple mosquitoes, but there were some no-see-ems. These are the only bugs we have seen the entire trip.

DAY FIFTY THREE (25 19.54N 81 08.81W) Little Shark River

Sunday, March 27th

Up early, pulled the muddy anchor (even had to wash the chain as it was coming up), and got under way by 7:30 AM. Homeward bound. Expect to arrive in Marco late afternoon. Wind light, out of the south, pretty much off our stern. The Spinnaker is up and we're making about 4 knots.



Arrived in Marco at 6:30PM. As we passed through Goodland we picked up Ted and Sarah, of the motor vessel *Manatee*, who



met us en-route in the *Little Manatee*, their dingy. We brought them on board and had cocktails while towing the *Little Manatee* to Marco.

It's good to be home, but sad that the adventure is over and now only a memory.

This has been an incredible trip. I'd do it again! We have traveled 1,112 Nautical Miles (1,280 Statute miles, 2,059 KM) in 53 days at an average speed of about 5-6 knots. The three of us have gotten along well and enjoyed each others company. We've eaten well, and often! The Brigadoon II has performed superbly and provided a comfortable platform for our adventure. There have been a number of equipment failures...broken lines, a spun prop, screws vibrating out the shift linkage, faulty propane valve, bad carburetor, broken auto-pilot belt, broken wind machine and more...but we've applied our collective talents and the vast selection of spare parts Lee carries aboard the Brigadoon, and persevered.

THE END



APPENDIX I

BAHAMAS CRUISE THIS SEASON

Lee Henderson

I am planning to cruise the Bahamas this winter in my Brigadoon II any buddy boat are welcome to join in. My crew includes Ed Crane of Marco Island and my Brother-in Law Craig Letho from Denver, Colorado.

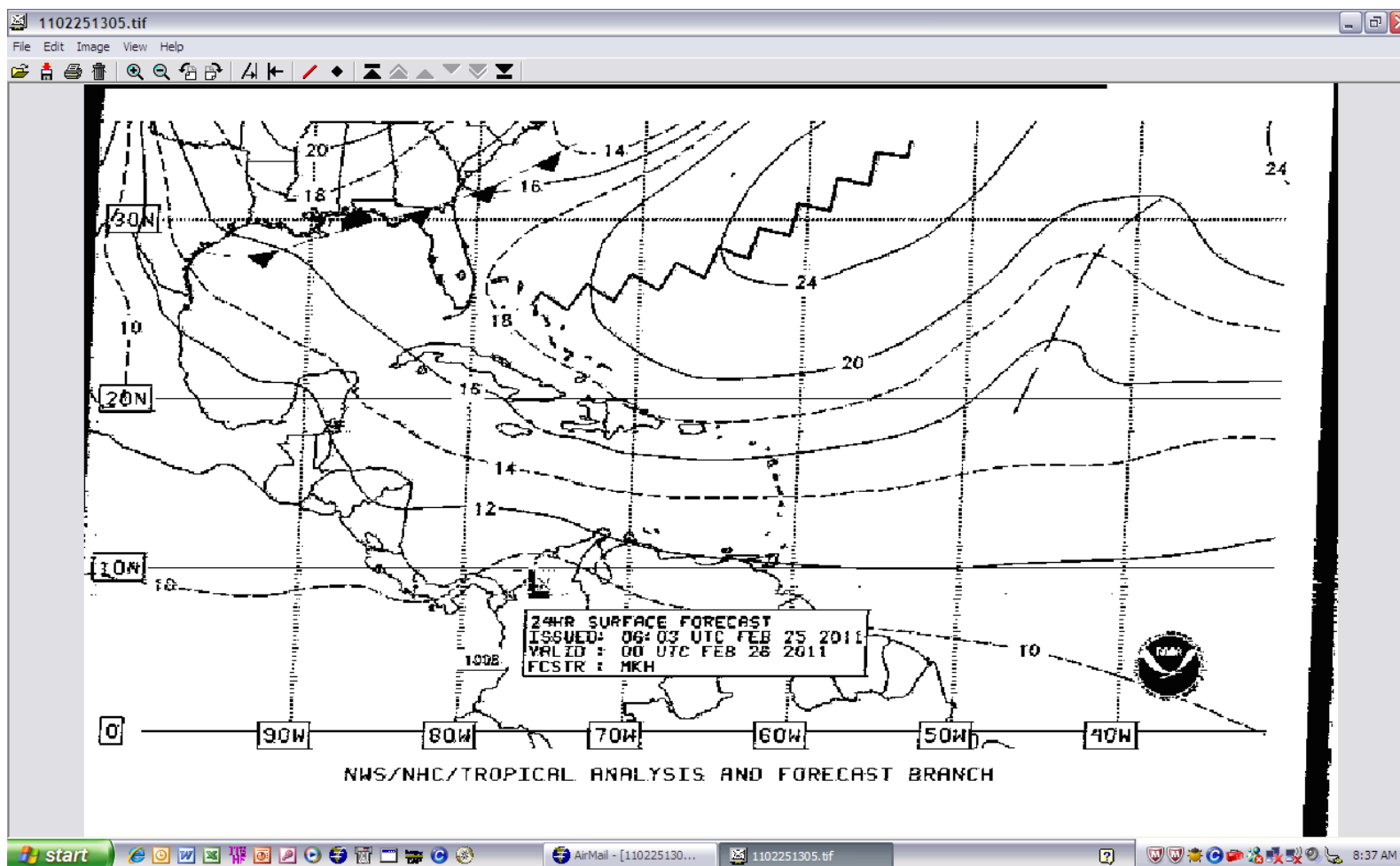
We will sail from here to Pumpkin Key which is an Island at the bottom of Biscayne Bay and off Key Largo. This will take + or - 3 days. We will wait there for a good weather window to proceed out Angelfish Pass and cross the Gulf Stream to Cat Key in the Bahamas, 56 NM. We will anchor there and rest up. We plan to check into the Bahamas there which costs \$300 for the boat Cruising Pass to sail the Bahamas. From there we sail across Bahamas Bank to Chub Key, a long leg of 75 NM. Then we sail an easy 35 NM to Nassau. There we get a slip in the Marina for a couple days. Then we sail to Allen Key which is at the northern end of the Exuma Island Chain and then leisurely work our way down the Exuma Island Chain to Georgetown. This will take a week or so. One place we will visit is Staniel Key which is where they filmed the original 007 movie Thunderball. We also stop and anchor at Warwick Wells Exuma Park and Norman Key. Black point is a good place to fill up with free fresh water. In Georgetown we attend and participate in the Cruisers Regatta for a week and more. Check out this web site on the Regatta: <http://www.georgetowncruising.com/index.htm>. Dottie and I have attended this Regatta before and believe me, it is a great time. When we were there last there were over 500 boats. After the regatta plan to check out Long Island, Cat Island and Eleuthera on our way back to Nassau. In Eleuthera we will anchor and visit Government Harbour (another good place for free water) and Hatchet Bay where I used to keep my Brigadoon II in charter. From Nassau we return to Marco the same route we went, in reverse. I have made this trip before and I am familiar with all these places. I just want to return for old times sake. Dottie may fly to Georgetown and join us for the regatta.

Again, if anyone wants to buddy boat with us, Brigadoon II departs Marco on 31 January or 1 February and we do not expect to be back to Marco until late March or early April. If you are interested, just let me know your intentions.

Lee Henderson
LHHenderson@embarqmail.com, or
phone: 389-5515

APPENDIX II

Sample of a weather fax received aboard the Brigadoon II



APPENDIX III

BRIGADOON II PROVISIONS FOR THE BAHAMAS TRIP, FEB-MAR 2011

GENERAL	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER	SNACKS
√ ZIP LOCK BAGS	√ CHEERIOS	√ RAMAN NOODLES	√ SPAGETTI & SAUCE	√ RAISINS
√ PAPER TOWELS	√ CANNED/DRY MILK	√ TUNA FISH	√ SAUSAGE, COOKED	√ PEANUTS in can
√ OIL, OLIVE, COOKING	√ OATMEAL, instant	√ HEARTY SOUPS	√ FLANK STEAK, COOKED	√ PEANUT in shells
√ BREAD CRUMBS (fish)	√ JUICE-CANS	√ PB & J	√ CANNED MEATS	√ OTHER SNACKS
√ JOY DISH SOAP	√ COFFEE, REG	√ MAYO	√ PARM CHEESE (spagetti)	√ OLIVES, black, pitted
√ SPICES/ HERBS	√ TEA	√ MUSTARD	√ RICE, bags	√ SALSA
√ SOY SAUCE	√ SPAM	√ COLD CUTS	√ PASTA	√ LIMES, DOTTIE
√ SALT & PEPPER	√ CANNED FRUIT	√ KETCHUP	√ CANNED VEGGIES	√ FRUIT, DRYED
√ CURRY POWDER	√ GRANOLA BARS	√ RICE, boiling bags	√ BEANS, BLACK	√ TRAIL MIX
√ CRYSTAL LITE	√ CREAMORA	√ LUNCH MEAT	√ SALAD DRESSINGS	√ CHEESE BLOCKS(4)
√ TRASH BAGS	√ CEREAL BARS	√ BREAD/ROLLS	√ DINTY MOORE STEW	√ SANDWICH ZIPLOCKS
√ ALUMINUM FOIL	√ RAISEN BRAN	√ LETTUCE	√ CHILI	√ SALTINES
√ OLIVIO(3)/ COOKING (30 oz)	√ FRUIT CUPS	√ FRESH FRUIT	√ POTATOES, canned	√ MIXED NUTS
√ PAM (SMALL)	√ V8 JUICE (bm's ,vodka?)	√ TOMATOES	√ GARLIC, crushed, jar	√ PITA CHIPS
√ BLACKEND FISH SPICES	√ WOOSTER (bloodym's)		√ PULLED PORK, COOKED	√ CRACKERS
√ BOOZE: scotch, rum, vodka	√ HOT SAUCE		√ INSTANT MASHED POT.	√ PRETEZELS
√ ZIPL STORAGE CONTAINERS	√ HORSERADISH (bm's)		√ DICED TOMATOES	√ PEPPERONI SLICES
√ KLEENEX	√ CELERY SALT (bm's)		√ PUDDINGS -desert	
√ REAL LEMON JUICE (fish)	√ PANCAKE MIX		√ CANNED CORN	
√ SEAFOOD MAGIC (prudhome)	√ SYRUP		√ CANNED BEANS	
√ BOUNCE	√ EGGS		√ CANNED PEAS	
√ 2 GALLON ZIP LOCK BAGS	√ SLICED CHEDDAR		√ RANCH DRESSING	
√ ASS WIPE (TP)	√ BAGELS		√ BLUE CHEESE DRESSING	
√ HAND SOAP/ SANITIZER	√ YOGERT		√ ITALIAN DRESSING	
√ WATER/DRINKS			√ ONIONS, fresh	
√ BEER -kind?			√ GREEN PEPPERS	
√ LAUNDRY DETERGENT				
√ HAND SOAP/ SANITIZER				
√ WHITE VINEGAR				

■ = DOTTIE
√ = DONE