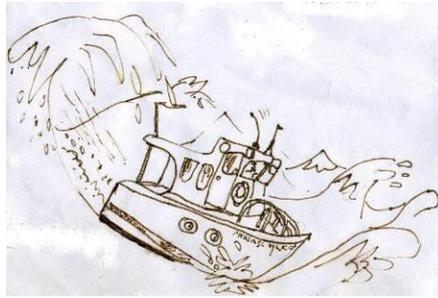


Passagemaker Newsletter

March 2017



From Antigua, West Indies

Whoever wrote the lines... "Give me a tall ship and a star to steer her by" ... clearly had never prepared a ship of any sort for an ocean crossing.



First you have to make sure the boat is in good working order, especially if she is a beautiful 54 year old teak hulled motor yacht like Passagemaker. Louise checked the hull for any signs of weakness or attack by the dreaded toredo worm that wreaked havoc on the English oak of ships of old. Then the hull has to be scraped clean of old barnacles and then painted with two coats of anti-fouling which costs over US \$200 a gallon. (Of course we had to allow extra as Louise likes her share too.)



Inside we replace every hose that looked suspicious, serviced all the through-hull fittings, installed no less than ten heavy duty truck

batteries courtesy Massy Auto and Laughlin de Gannes, rebuilt bilge pumps of which we have four, serviced all the fuel injectors in Big Bertha, our 6 litre Ford main engine, and Genny, our 8 KW Northern Lights generator. Seats had to be reupholstered, outboard engines serviced, six thousand litres of diesel loaded courtesy Sterling Insurances Services, a new Furuno GPS fitted and connected to the auto pilot, charts of every port in the Mediterranean loaded onto our laptop and so on and so on.

Plus of course the new anchor chains which now sits bright and shiny on the foredeck resting comfortably in the nice new gypsies all thanks to that elite band of supporters known as the **Passagemaker Chain Gang**. This photo shows the old rusty chain in the middle with the new chain hanging on racks so we can paint different colours for different depths. Budget Marine came through for us with a great price and a donation of chain itself.



We have to mention here a giant thank you to Don and Tessa Stollmeyer and the staff of Powerboats who have really been very helpful. Couldn't have done it without them.



Of course once the outside is attended to, the mechanical and electrical is sorted, now you have to buy your supplies and stow them. Every one of these tins had

to have the name of the contents and the expiry date written on the end for easy identification and there were dozens of them. In the middle of the ocean there are no medical services so with the help of Lee's Pharmacy we have no less than US \$400 worth of anti-biotics, pain killers, sea sickness tablets, bandages, sutures and more.



But finally we were done. Passagemaker was launched on 10th of March, our farewell party was held on board on Saturday the 11th, immigration and customs dealt with and then poor Louise put her back out so we had to wait until Thursday 16th to finally depart, an auspicious date as grandson Jake celebrated his 11th birthday on the same day. The little delay served us well as it gave one of our most stalwart sponsors, Roy Peake, a chance to hand over a case of wonderful aged Angostura rum along with words of advice about what happened to

Gordon in Egypt in the days of Queen Victoria!



The first leg to Union Island at the southern end of the Grenadines was pretty lumpy. But once you see the spectacular water and gentle breezes there it is all worthwhile.

And it was at Union that we ran into our good friend Martin, owner of the 80 year old wooden working boat Scaramouche which is enjoying a leisurely retirement doing Jolly



Roger trips for cruise ships passengers. He was a true friend as part of our rigging had broken on the trip up and he quickly

organise one of his guys "Parker" to go 16 metres (50 feet) up the mast in the bosun's chairs and replace the broken items. Of course we had spares on board. Naturally we had to use a bottle of Roy's rum to splice the main brace to say thank you.

We also had the pleasure of meeting up with Don and Tessa Stollmeyer in Union as they had family in from Canada and US and were taking them out cruising each day on their beautiful catamaran Ballerina Girl which Don built himself from scratch!



By coincidence Saturday 18th was Don's 64 birthday and also Passagemaker's 54th birthday so Tessa made a lovely cake and we celebrated both.

So now we are in Antigua. Lots of little things to do. Find out why the 12-volt alternator on the main engine isn't working (yes, we have a spare); go online and pay credit card bills before they charge us interest; shop for fresh fruits and vegetables for the crossing substituting cabbage for lettuce as it keeps much longer; activate our satellite phone for one month for US \$120 for the crossing; get as many weather forecast as we can for the Atlantic in April; top up our water and diesel tanks and finally go out to dinner somewhere nice one last time before our crossing to Portugal which we estimate will take a month.

Captain Peter & Admiral Louise

Our voyages have been helped enormously by our sponsors and we are proud to mention them here.

