

# Papua New Guinea Compendium

A Compilation of Guidebook References and Cruising Reports



**IMPORTANT:** USE ALL INFORMATION IN THIS DOCUMENT AT YOUR OWN RISK!!

Rev 2023.1 – 24-Jun-2023

We welcome updates to this guide!  
(especially for places we have no cruiser information on)

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The current home of the official copy of this document is <http://svsoggypaws.com/files/>

If you found it posted elsewhere, there might be an updated copy at svsoggypaws.com.

## Revision Log

Many thanks to all who have contributed over the years!!

Rev	Date	Notes
2023.1	23-Jun-2023	Updates regarding check-in at Alotau and stops in the Louisiades, Budi Budi, and Hermits by Obiwan in 2022.
2022.2	24-Sep-2022	Warning about <a href="#">boarding</a> on the southwest side of New Britain
2022.1	24-May-2022	A few details and corrections in the Kavieng section. Updates on Ninigos. Passage reports from our 2019 trip.
2019.6	15-Nov-2019	Kimbe to Manus to Ninigos from Soggy Paws. More Manus from La Grotty. Rabaul to Kimbe from Patience.
2019.5	20-Sep-2019	Updates on Manus from Toucan. Updates on clearing in to Rabaul from Soggy Paws. Cruising from Rabaul to Kimbe Bay from Soggy Paws.
2019.4	30-Aug-2019	A few more areas included from various blogs. Info from N New Britain.
2019.3	13-April-2019	Soggy Paws Notes passing West to East along N coast, and into Kavieng and Rabaul and down the west coast of Buka and Bouganville. Screensaver's transit through Buka and Bouganville. Shipping parts to Kavieng from Indigo II.
2019.2	21-Feb-2019	Free Bird's notes around Milne Bay, Songlines 2011 cruise. 2XS's stuff. More Field Trip.
2019.1	18-Jan-2019	Updated cell phone information. Various tidbits. Ciguatera Info.
2018.2	15-Dec-2018	L'il Explorers and Field Trip on the Mortlocks and Nuguria Atoll, and Ninigos. Notes on Gulf Harbor Radio (SSB section)
2018.1	04-Feb-2018	Several small updates
2017.2	11-Aug-2017	Updates from Screensaver's blog on transit West to East along the north coast. May 2016 reports from s/v Alk (Noonsite). Some more research on visas, etc.
2017.1	16-Apr-2017	Random updates have been made as I stumble across info on Noonsite and various cruiser's blogs.



*Figure 1-1 The Papua New Guinea National Flag*

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# 1 Introduction

The original Compendium for the Tuamotus in French Polynesia started out as a way for s/v Soggy Paws and a few friends to organize notes and various internet sources on the Tuamotus, prior to our cruise there in Spring of 2010. Later, it became a way for us to pass on what we've learned while cruising the Tuamotus in 2010 and 2011. Now the idea has migrated with Soggy Paws, from the Tuamotus, to the Marquesas, to the Societies, Hawaii, the Cooks and Samoas, Tonga, Fiji, the islands between Fiji and the Marshall Islands, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia parts of SE Asia, and now the trip from PNG through the Solomons, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia.

If you haven't yet found our other 'Compendiums', they're available online at <http://svsoggypaws.com/files/>

This is not intended to replace the guidebooks or charts, but to supplement out-of-date guides with recent cruiser first-hand reports, and fill in places that the guides don't cover.

To compile this 'compendium', we have used all sources at our disposal, including websites, blogs, emails, and our own experience. We always try to indicate the source of our information, and the approximate time frame.

If your information is included in this guide, and you object to its inclusion, please just email us, and we'll remove it. But this is a non-commercial venture mainly to help cruisers from all of our collective experiences.

## 1.1 Organization of the Guide

This guide is loosely organized from East to West and South to North in PNG, along the route that a cruiser coming up from Australia would normally take. (This is the most common route). Those of you moving down the island chain will just have to read it backwards!

## 1.2 Overview of the Area

### 1.2.1 Navigational Cautions

**From the 2010 CMAP chart in the Louisiades:** (probably applies to most of PNG's reefy areas): The South Subtropical Current sets generally westward at 2 knots. However, it may be influenced by (a) The Monsoon (Nov-Feb) to set generally SE at 2 knots and (b) The Trades (May-Sep) to set generally NW at up to 1.5 knots. Tidal streams in reef and atoll openings are generally very strong and cannot be depended upon to turn with coastal high and low waters. See also nautical publications relating to currents.

**Soggy Paws – 2019:** In PNG, our Garmin charts are MOST OF THE TIME fairly accurate, but not always detailed enough. The latest Navionics we downloaded on our tablet recently, is also MOST OF THE TIME fairly accurate, but often not detailed enough. The CM93 V2 charts varied. Much of the time, they were fairly accurate as to depth, but the chart needed to be adjusted a little (which you can do using OpenCPN).

We used primarily satellite charts that we made ourselves. This was the only way to guarantee that we had detailed and accurate information. However, there are a few places where even GoogleEarth doesn't have good charting. Using SASPlanet, we could switch between several



different satellite data sets, using the best view for every chart. Then we used GE2KAP to make a KAP file (electronic chart format used by OpenCPN) and then we could easily switch views between conventional charts and satellite charts.

We believe Satellite-based charts are the only way to safely navigate in PNG.

Our Track files, and our satellite charts are available for download, here:

<http://svsoggypaws.com/satcharts/>

Once you have downloaded our charts, scroll to the end of the list, and there are additional links to others' chart sets.

All of our waypoints have been given to Terry Sargent of Yacht Valhalla, and Terry's download links can be accessed here:

<http://svsoggypaws.com/terrystopics.htm> Download Terry's doc file, and search for PNG. The file sharing website looks a little spammy, but Terry's files are safe to download.

[http://svocelot.com/Cruise\\_Info/Equipment/KAP\\_Downloads.htm](http://svocelot.com/Cruise_Info/Equipment/KAP_Downloads.htm)

<http://yachtvalhalla.net/navigation/terrystopics.htm>

Best navigation program to use (in our opinion) is [OpenCPN](#).

### **1.3 Time Zone**

The Papua New Guinea time zone is UTC +10.

### **1.4 Weather In This Area**

#### **1.4.1 General Weather Conditions**

#### **1.4.2 Weather Sources – With Onboard Email**

**Soggy Paws - 2019:** In our transit through this area, what we used most of the time for watching the weather were these files (via the free service Saildocs):

Text forecasts ():

send tbd

A spot forecast for the location we were in—every 6 hours for 10 days

```
send spot:07.1N,171.3E|10,6|PRMSL,WIND,WAVES,RAIN,LFTX
```

A 'local' GRIB file that gave a fairly detailed forecast for a reasonably small area for about 5 days, and included sea state information

```
send GFS:6N,10N,173E,165E|.5,.5|0,6..144|PRMSL,WIND,HTSGW,WVDIR,RAIN
```

A 'wide range' GRIB that watched conditions approaching us. The area we request while in transit was a pretty wide area on a 3x3 grid, for the next 10 days. This is about a 25K GRIB file. This provided a decent long range forecast.

```
send GFS:0N,30N,160E,175W|3,3|0,12..240|PRMSL,WIND,RAIN
```

During times of tropical activity, we also found these sources useful for additional perspective

### **1.4.3 Weather Sources – Voice**

**Soggy Paws – 2017:** Someone told us that Hans aboard Sea Goon hangs out in the Louisiades and keeps a net going on 8170 at 0800 Local, when he is cruising.

### **1.4.4 Weather Sources – Internet**

#### **Gulf Harbor Radio**

Gulf Harbor Radio is a cruiser/weather radio service that broadcasts a weather overview for the SW Pacific every weekday morning from 1 May to Nov 30. Their primary focus is on cruisers making passages between NZ and other SW Pacific countries. PNG is a little far NW of their primary zone, but if you check in with them, they may provide some useful weather information.

Details here:

#### **Satellite Pictures**

Western PNG and all the SW Pacific:

<http://www.goes.noaa.gov/sohemi/sohemiloops/shirgmscolw.html>

Bob McDavit's Weather Blog

<https://metbob.wordpress.com/>

The Mother of All Weather Websites

This site covers Guam, but probably also covers PNG to a limited extent.

<http://weather.jeffspiratescove.com/>

This site is somewhat bandwidth-heavy, but a good place to start, and you can bookmark individual links if you are normally bandwidth-stressed.

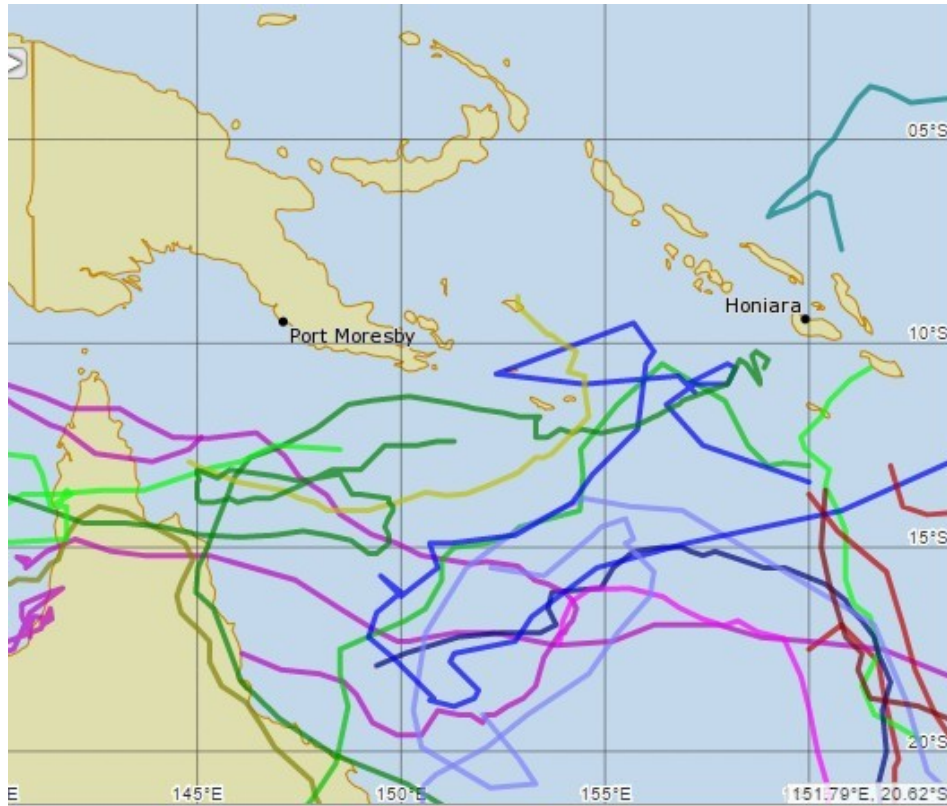
### **1.4.5 Tropical Weather**

The Joint Typhoon Warning Center is the best source of typhoon forecasting in the western Pacific, north of the equator.

<http://www.usno.navy.mil/JTWC/>

This site aggregates inputs from the various surrounding weather offices (primarily NOAA, the US Navy, and Japan) and produces a consolidated forecast.

PNG and northern Solomons are generally considered out of the cyclone zone.



Western South Pacific Cyclone Tracks 2011-2016 (source Australian BOM)

The Australian meteorology office has official “ownership” of the waters near Australia, including PNG, Solomons, and Vanuatu. The cyclone page for the Australian met office is here:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/cyclone/>

To check on individual storms, dates, etc, here is the website:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/cyclone/history/tracks/index.shtml>

## 1.5 Customs & Immigration

Best to double-check the respective government websites before you make landfall, to make sure you are aware of the latest government requirements. Links provided below.

### 1.5.1 Pre-Arrival – Visa Requirements

**Obiwan – September 2022 – Aolatau:** Before leaving Australia we made contact with Driftwood Resort in Aolatau. It is a boat-friendly resort with a wooden dock where sailing boat are welcome to tie. Marcus, the Australian boss of the resort arranged for the custom, immigration and health officers to come to the resort for clearing us in the country.

Before leaving Australia we also applied online for a “yachtperson visa” as visa on arrival was not available due to covid. We also filled up and sent all the relevant document as per [SV Ocelot guide](#).

**Soggy Paws – July 2019:** We applied for and received a new PNG visa in Honiara, Solomons, from the PNG High Commission. They state a 5 day turnaround, but we asked them nicely if

they could expedite that and we got a 48 hr turnaround. They required the usual paperwork (Boat registration, crew list, passports, and maybe a passport picture). Subsequently, we found out that PNG had as of June 1, 2019 initiated an online visa application process. Here is the announcement we got by email for a PNG tourist-related source:

*The PNG Government has now created an online eVisa for all tourists who can apply anytime and anywhere on the Department of Immigration website at [www.ica.gov.pg](http://www.ica.gov.pg).*

Our friends on Ocelot did this in Aug 2019, and just printed out the visa and presented it at check-in, and had no problems. They applied for and received a PNG visa online with about 1 day turnaround.

Note that there is a separate visa for “Yachtpersons” instead of the Easy Visitor Permit. This is a 60 day visa with a possible 30 day extension. I don’t know if the 30-day restriction for Aussies applies to this visa. I also don’t know if it ONLY applies to the “Captain”, or whether it might extend to the “crew” as well.

**Soggy Paws – 2018:** There is the possibility of a 30-day Visa on Arrival, at least in major ports. However, cruisers normally go to the effort of getting a visa, as it provides “bonafides” if you are trying to check in at one of the satellite ports, or you have not yet reached a checkin port.

It’s difficult to get a PNG visa because their offices are few and far between (list below). Boats heading east from Indonesia can reportedly get a visa in Jayapura (Screensaver did this).

We got our visas while back in the USA by sending our passports, an application form, a cover letter explaining that we will be arriving and traveling on our own boat, and a copy of boat registration and crew list. It cost \$100 per passport (they accepted a check). We Fed Exed them from Florida and included a return Fed Ex form (we of course waited until the very last minute to do this).

<http://immigration.gov.pg/> From this website:

#### General Visa Requirements

Anyone who is not a Papua New Guinea citizen needs a valid visa to enter and spend time in Papua New Guinea. All foreign nationals should obtain a visa before travelling to Papua New Guinea. Persons who travel to Papua New Guinea on board a vessel without a visa must apply for a Border Visa at the first port of arrival. A Border Visa allows one entry into Papua New Guinea with a maximum stay of 30 days. Only officers of the Department of Immigration can grant these visas. As officers from the Department are not permanently present at the ports, applicants may suffer considerable inconvenience and delay on arrival. For more information on Papua New Guinea visa requirements please contact the Department of Immigration.

Remember, don't overstay your visa!

If your visa is about to expire, you should leave Papua New Guinea or seek advice from the Department of Immigration.

Embassy Locations:

#### **AUSTRALIA:**

PNG Consulate General Christie Centre  
320 Adelaide Street, level 11/8 Brisbane, QLD, 4000

GPO Box 220  
Brisbane, QLD 4001 Australia

PNG High Commission  
39-41 Forster Crescent  
PO Box E 432 PARKES ACT 2600

And an addition from sv Indigo, Dec 2018:

PNG Consulate  
Suite G04  
247 Coward Street  
MASCOT, NSW

Phone 02 9283 2070

Open 9:30am - 1:00pm Monday to Friday

Processing of visa requests takes 7 days

**NEW ZEALAND:**

PNG High Commission 279 Willis Street  
PO Box 197  
WELLINGTON

**SOLOMON ISLANDS:**

Papua New Guinea High Commission  
PO Box 1109  
HONIARA

**EUROPEAN COMMUNITY:**

Papua New Guinea Embassy  
Avenue De Tervuren,  
430 1150 BRUSSELS

**USA:**

Papua New Guinea Embassy  
1779 Massachusetts Avenue  
NW Suite 805  
Washington, DC 20036

**JAPAN**

Papua New Guinea Embassy  
Mita Kokusai Building 3F 313  
4-28 Mita 1-Chome  
TOKYO

**FIJI:**

Papua New Guinea Embassy  
PO Box 2447

SUVA

**INDONESIA:**

Papua New Guinea Embassy  
Panin Bank Center, 6th Floor  
Jalan Jendral Sudirman 1  
JAKARTA 10270

Note: It was reported by s/v Screensaver in 2017 that it was possible to get a PNG visa in Jayapura (the Indonesian town on the PNG border).

**UNITED KINGDOM:**

Papua New Guinea High Commission  
14 Waterloo Place  
LONDON SW1R 4AR

**THE PHILIPINES:**

Papua New Guinea Embassy  
280 Magnolia Street  
Dasmarianas Village MAKATI  
METRO MANILA

**WARNING:**

Persons who do not observe the following requirements are liable to heavy penalties under Papua New Guinea Immigration Law.

- 1) Entry permit holders must ensure that they always have a valid permit and passport. Holders of expired or cancelled entry permits are prohibited immigrants and may be deported.
- 2) The Migration Act 1978 lays down penalties for persons who deliver or otherwise furnish for official purposes of the government, documents containing information or statements that are false or misleading.

From the PNG Immigration website:

**ENTRY PERMIT TYPES AND CLASSES**

VISITOR CATEGORY - Yachtsperson

- Owner, captain, and crew of a yacht as well as any accompanying spouse and/or children.

VALIDITY: All visitor entry permits are valid for a single entry stay of sixty (60) days from the date of arrival. Work is prohibited. ONE 30-day extension is possible.

WHERE TO APPLY: For those arriving by yacht, application can be made at ICD (IMMIGRATION & CITIZENSHIP DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS & IMMIGRATION OR PNG IMMIGRATION SERVICE) or at the designated international port of entry.

Designated PNG international ports of entry are:

- Jackson's International Airport, Port Moresby;
- Daru;

- (Vanimo) Wutung; and
- Kagamuga Airport, Mt Hagen.

#### HOW TO APPLY

1. Complete the "Application for Entry Permit" (Form 1)
2. Pay the Migration Service Fee (MSF) as set out in the Summary Table.
3. Provide passport and documentary evidence as follows:

Yacht person:

- Proof of ownership of vessel/ captain's papers;
- Ship's log for details of crewmembers;
- Customs Clearance form must be completed.

Accompanying dependents and crewmembers are issued with a Tourist/visitor entry permit upon arrival.

EXTENSION OF STAY: Extensions can be granted once only for a maximum of thirty (30) days whilst in PNG.

Applicants for extension should:

- Complete the "Application to Extend Entry Permit" (Form 4);
- Pay the MSF as set out in the Summary Table.
- Provide a letter stating reasons for extension.
- Provide a copy of return airline ticket.

Further applications will not be considered.

**MIGRATION SERVICE FEES:** All Tourist Visas are free. Extensions for yacht crews cost 400 Kina.

**L'il Explorers – June 2018:** Before we left for PNG from the Solomon Islands, we went to Honiara and got visas for entry. They are free to get, you just need to go to the PNG consulate with your passports. The consulate asks for a week to do the visas, but with some begging we had it in 3 days.

With these visa's we headed to Kavieng for the formal check-in.

Checking-in was so pleasant, I first went to Quarantine, but nobody was there, so I walked to customs. Customs was very professional, and stamped the passports with no questions. When I returned to quarantine the officer was there, I filled out a form with the boat name, stated we had no pets or plants, and paid a 56k (\$17 USD) fee. There was no inspection of the boat.

**Alk – May 2016:** Visa are required for most foreigners. Two months visa are issued free of charge. A two month visa can only be extended one time for 30 days at a cost of Kina 400. Paperwork to extend is a hassle and not worth the trouble.

**Segue – December 2014 – Clearing in to Rabaul with Visa On Arrival**  
(via Noonsite Published: 2014-12-04 [Papua New Guinea](#))

There have been MAJOR changes entering PNG - and it's all good!

Previously, one needed a visa prior to entering PNG waters. This has now changed. The government has recently passed legislation enabling visas on arrival -- which applies to two



ports of entry -- Port Moresby and Rabaul. While the new rules apply primarily to persons entering PNG by air -- at least in New Britain, it also applies to yachts.

We just cleared into PNG at the Rabaul Airport and were granted 60 day visas (free!) -- which CAN be extended for another 30 days at a cost of K\$400. There was ABSOLUTELY no fuss or bother. So, the procedure for clearing into PNG (at least in Rabaul) is as follows:

1) Anchor in Rabaul just off the yacht club (it's easy to find -- it's to the right of the main wharf as you enter the Harbour).

2) Contact "Rabaul Harbour Control" on VHF16 and let them know you've arrived -- and request quarantine clearance.

3) Harbour Control will let you know when you might expect Bio Security to come out to the boat.

4) At the appointed time, keep an eye open on the shore and at some point a pick up truck will show up with both Quarantine and Health Inspectors. Go and get them in the dinghy. Don't worry, these are two (or maybe three) of the most easy-going civil-servants you'll ever meet). Their services will cost about US\$90.00. Don't panic! Everything else is free after this point!

5) Next step is Customs. This is super easy, except you have to take a bus! Customs is located in the nearby town of Kokopo. From the yacht club, walk up to the main road and catch the #8 bus to the market for K1\$ (50 cents). Then at the market, catch the #8 bus to Kokopo (K\$3 -- us\$1.50) to Kokopo. It will drop you off at the market. From there, walk about 150 meters to the Westpac building (blue roof). Customs is on the 2nd floor. Again, another awesome sort of truly friendly civil-servants. They were not at ALL concerned that we checked in some number of weeks after leaving our last port (Vanuatu -- we cruised the Louisades for some time before we checked into Rabaul.....)

A note on security: Some cruisers have anchored off Kokopo, but it is NOT recommended. There is a lot of "banana boat" traffic from here to the nearby Duke of York islands -- and as recently as this week, a cruiser was assaulted on board and had some items stolen. Rabaul, on the other hand is more secure -- especially in front of the yacht club where there is 24/7 security monitoring the anchorage.

6) Last step is Immigration. Go back to the market and catch the #8 bus which will take you to the airport. This is where Immigration hangs out. If there's nobody there, duck into the arrivals area and find the Customs folks. They'll put out a call for the Immigration people for you. Don't be in a hurry. Chat up the Customs people. Lovely folks! You'll probably end-up having tea with them!

See more comments about Rabaul in general in the [Rabaul](#) section.

**Tagtraumer – December 2014:** It is very important that yachts follow the proper procedure for clearing into PNG through Kokopo/Rabaul.

You must anchor by Rabaul so that Quarantine inspection can be carried out before you are cleared in with Immigration and Customs in Kokopo. The authorities are extremely concerned that yachts are not adhering to the correct procedures. The Quarantine man, Peter Johnson,

said the best thing to do is to go to the Yacht Club and they will help yachts do things the right way.

There was talk of fining us and another yacht who had done things the wrong way round too. Rabaul is the official Port of Entry, not Kokopo.

### **1.5.2 Pre-Arrival – Pre Arrival Notification Requirements**

<http://customs.gov.pg/border-security/aircraft-ships/small-crafts/>

The government (Customs) website says this:

All small craft pre-arrival information/notices (including unscheduled flights) must be emailed to [NCC@customs.gov.pg](mailto:NCC@customs.gov.pg)

The Master of a vessel arriving in Papua New Guinea is required to give notice of impending arrival. There are several agencies interested in your arrival - principally Customs, Quarantine and Immigration.

To make arrangements for smooth processing, prior notification of your arrival is necessary. The Master of a vessel arriving in Papua New Guinea is required by law to give notice of impending arrival not later than 48 hours before arrival. Penalties may apply for failure to do so.

You will need to provide the following information:

- the name of your yacht
- your intended first port of arrival
- your estimated arrival time
- your last four ports
- the details of people on board
- including name, date of birth,
- nationality, and passport number
- details of any illness or disease recently encountered
- if you have any animals on board
- if you have any firearms on board.

Also s/v Adina gave the email address of the Vanaimo harbormaster in mid 2015 as [Levi.Langai@pngports.com.pg](mailto:Levi.Langai@pngports.com.pg)

**Soggy Paws – August 2019 - Rabaul:** We obtained our visas in advance from Honiara or via the new online system (our buddy boat). We also emailed a filled-out copy of the PNG (Excel) form called “Form4\_Small\_craft\_electronic\_manifest\_v2.0\_dbadi” to Mr. Dennis Badi of Immigration, announcing our impending arrival ahead of time. With a visa in advance, the Customs officer can stamp your passports, and you no longer have to go to the airport in Kokopo to see an actual Immigration Officer.

48 hours before arrival in Rabaul, we emailed the [NCC@customs.gov.pg](mailto:NCC@customs.gov.pg) email address with the same information that was on the Small Craft form. Did not receive a reply, but did not have any problems getting cleared in in Rabaul.

**Soggy Paws – Feb 2019:** When we emailed the [NCC@customs.gov.pg](mailto:NCC@customs.gov.pg) email address (using our sailmail account), we received several responses back. This is a central email address that is forwarded around to the appropriate port that you are checking in with.

### **1.5.3 Immigration – Initial Check In**

<http://immigration.gov.pg/>

**Obiwan – September 2022 – Aolatau:** Before leaving we made contact with Driftwood Resort. It is a boat friendly resort with a wooden dock where sailing boat are welcome to tie. Marcus, the Australian boss of the resort arranged for the custom, immigration and health officers to come to the resort for clearing us in the country.

All the officers were very kind and helpful, the boss of custom is a nice Lady called Sarah Mogi +67570048032. She gave us her telephone number and told us to call her if we had any problems.

At the end we paid 80 Kina for our clearance

With Sarah we managed to clear in and out of the country at the same time. She simply asked us which date we wanted her to put on our clear out. So we could visit all the Luisiades and then sail north to Budi Budi and from there directly to Solomons Islands.

**Soggy Paws – August 2019 - Rabaul:** We obtained our visas in advance from Honiara or via the new online system (our buddy boat). We also emailed a filled-out copy of the PNG (Excel) form called “Form4\_Small\_craft\_electronic\_manifest\_v2.0\_dbadi” to Mr. Dennis Badi of Immigration, announcing our impending arrival ahead of time. With a visa in advance, the Customs officer can stamp your passports, and you no longer have to go to the airport in Kokopo to see an actual Immigration Officer.

**Soggy Paws – Feb/Mar 2019 - Kavieng:** We managed to check in at Kavieng, with 2 boats not having a visa in advance (the “visa in advance” was obtained by email). See [Kavieng](#) section.

**Screensaver – December 2018:** You CANNOT check in at Manus or Kavieng without getting a visa in advance. You CAN check in at Buka (Bouganville), and this is the normal check-in spot coming from the Solomons.

If you are coming from the west, and you want to check in at Kavieng, best to stop in Jayapura on your way east to get a visa from the PNG. It can be done in a day.

If you are planning to stop at Jayapura for fuel and/or PNG visas, DO NOT check out of Biak, but save your check out and do it in Jayapura.

### **1.5.4 Immigration – Renewing Visas**

**Soggy Paws – June 2019:** We were told by the lady at the PNG High Commission in Honiara that you do NOT have to send your passports to Port Moresby to renew your PNG visas.

However, we were never able to confirm that this was true in actual fact. We got 60 days on arrival in Rabaul, and that was enough to get us out of the country without having to renew.

### **1.5.5 Customs**

<http://customs.gov.pg/>

<http://customs.gov.pg/border-security/aircraft-ships/small-crafts/>

From the government website:

All small craft pre-arrival information/notices (including unscheduled flights) must be emailed to [NCC@customs.gov.pg](mailto:NCC@customs.gov.pg)

The following information applies to the noncommercial use of yachts, motor sailers, and motor cruisers and provides an outline of the procedures and legal requirements which apply to the Master of these vessels arriving in and departing from Papua New Guinea.

If you are in charge of any of the above-mentioned craft, you are considered the Master of the craft, even if you are not its owner and the owner is on board.

Whether you are a returning resident or a visitor, you need to comply with entry requirements.

You can help speed this up if you follow these simple steps:

1. Make sure each person on board has a valid visa and passport;
2. Let Customs and Quarantine at the intended first port of entry know that you are coming and where and when you will arrive;
3. Clearly display the International Pratique Q-flag and travel directly to an appointed boarding station; and
4. Complete the arrival forms and Incoming Passenger Card.

Papua New Guinea has strict laws to protect its citizens and natural environment.

Penalties may be imposed if you breach those laws by illegally importing:

- drugs
- animal or plant material
- firearms, weapons, or ammunition
- some food items
- some medicinal products

#### **Arrival**

When you arrive in Papua New Guinea, you must first call at a Customs port of where Customs, Quarantine and Immigration formalities can be completed. Please note that not all Customs ports have a permanent presence.

When entering Papua New Guinean waters you are required to clearly display the International Pratique Q-flag (yellow). Your craft must also travel directly to an appointed boarding station.

#### **Berthing**

Customs, Quarantine and Immigration clearance must be completed before going ashore. Please stay on board. No persons other than a Quarantine or Customs officer is allowed to board your craft, nor can any person, animal or article leave the craft until you have been given full clearance.

Depending on your arrival time, Customs and Quarantine may require all persons to remain on board overnight before clearing you the following day.

Don't throw any waste or foodstuffs overboard while you're in Papua New Guinean waters or while you are moored. Use designated quarantine disposal points. Keep all food and animals secure until Quarantine officers have inspected your vessel. Don't trade foodstuffs with other overseas vessels. Keep your vessel free of insects.

To go ashore without prior clearance is an offence. Contact with other vessels in port before clearance is also prohibited.

Documents required on arrival

All people on board will be required to produce a valid passport, visa, and completed Incoming Passenger Card.

The Master will be required to produce a completed Smallcraft Arrival Report.

Charges

Customs does not levy any charge for Customs and Immigration clearance. However, Quarantine operates on a full cost recovery basis.

Drugs

You must report any drugs on board your craft to Customs on arrival and departure. This includes medications containing narcotics, hallucinogens, amphetamines, barbiturates and tranquillisers in your medical kit.

Any drugs landed in Papua New Guinea or on board vessels imported into Papua New Guinea will have to meet the requirements of the Department of Health.

**WARNING:** Penalties for drug offences in Papua New Guinea are severe and could result in imprisonment.

Weapons and firearms

All weapons on your craft must be reported to Customs. Certain weapons may be detained in safe storage for transshipment to your intended port of departure (at Customs expense).

In cases where a weapon has been detained the Master will be required to contact Customs at least one week before departure so the weapon can be returned.

Duty-free allowance

For information about duty free allowances, visit the Customs website and follow the links from 'Travellers'. (Someone told me that it was possible for foreign vessels to buy duty free fuel in certain ports from certain operators (Noro)).

Currency

There is no limit on the amount of Papua New Guinean or foreign cash that may be brought into or taken out of Papua New Guinea, but travellers carrying K5000 or more, or the equivalent in foreign currency, must declare this on arrival and departure.

Currency includes notes and coins but does not include travellers cheques. Reporting is required by law and failure to do so is an offence.

#### Temporary import of goods

Commercial goods brought into Papua New Guinea with the intention of being sold are subject to the normal rates of duty and tax where applicable.

Goods, commercial or personal, that are brought into Papua New Guinea to remain temporarily may be admitted duty and tax-free, subject to certain conditions.

#### Your stay

When you arrive in Papua New Guinea, there are two clearance options depending on when you intend to leave. You may be granted a cruise permit or asked to provide a security for temporary importation. Both options provide access to Papua New Guinean waters and lands.

#### Cruise permits

A cruise permit may be issued to the Master of the craft if Customs is satisfied the craft is transiting Papua New Guinea for non-commercial purposes. Cruise permits may be issued for the length of the Master's visa.

Extension of the permit may be granted on application, provided you have an appropriate visa. You will be required to comply with certain conditions attached to the issue of the permit.

Cruise permits will not be issued if:

- the vessel is owned or operated by a Papua New Guinean resident; or
- the vessel, or parts of the vessel, are to be sold or listed for sale.

If circumstances of the craft's presence in Papua New Guinea change, you are required to advise Customs. Failure to do so can result in a cruise permit being revoked and the vessel being imported at which time payment of duty and tax will be required.

**What if the Master wants to fly home and come back later?** This is possible but prior approval from Customs must be obtained. You should contact Customs to discuss.

#### Temporary importation of vessels

If your visa allows you to reside in Papua New Guinea for a limited period you may be required to temporarily import a craft into Papua New Guinea. Temporary importation without paying Customs duty and tax is subject to:

- the vessel being exported within 12 months of arrival and
- a security in cash or an appropriate bank guarantee being provided equal to the duty and tax that would otherwise be payable.

**January 2019 - From A Local Yacht Friendly Contact at Kavieng, re the procedure to clear in at Kavieng WITHOUT a prior visa:** *Since there is currently no resident Immigration person in Kavieng, we asked if it is possible for a yacht to clear in in Kavieng without a prior visa.*

We had to bounce around a few offices to get clarification on issues. There is a lack of consistent guidance country wide, so consider this information SPECIFIC to arriving in Kavieng as FIRST Port of Call. Kavieng does not have an immigration officer - Customs only. This is the process we've identified with Customs in Kavieng and Immigration in Rabaul/Kokopo to allow you to arrive in Kavieng and get an electronic visa on arrival.

1. Fill out the attached form and email Mr Dennis Badi, OIC Immigration Rabaul [dbadi@immigration.gov.pg](mailto:dbadi@immigration.gov.pg) +675 7441 2713. He will enter you into the system as a free "electronic visa on arrival"
  - Non-australians get sixty days and can extend for K100.
  - Australians get 30 days and cannot extend - they must leave the country and re-enter.
2. Then sail into Kavieng and report to Kavieng Customs Office in town. Current (relieving until March) OIC is Daniel Wesley - [wesleyd@customs.gov.pg](mailto:wesleyd@customs.gov.pg) +675 7986 9487. He will clear you into country for Customs and stamp/date your passport. (Normal Customs Officer in Kavieng is Cyrol.)
3. Sail on.
4. When you are clearing PNG for another country you are to email an updated copy of your form to Mr Dennis Badi again so he can clear you out of the system.

All the officers involved have been very helpful and are keen to make this all as smooth and painless as possible.

**L'il Explorers – June 2018 – Kavieng Check-In:** Checking-in was so pleasant, I first went to Quarantine, but nobody was there, so I walked to customs. Customs was very professional, and stamped the passports with no questions. When I returned to quarantine the officer was there, I filled out a form with the boat name, stated we had no pets or plants, and paid a 56k (\$17 usd) fee. There was no inspection of the boat.

### **1.5.6 Health / Quarantine**

**Soggy Paws – Aug 2019:** There are two "quarantine" offices in PNG... Health Quarantine and Plant Quarantine (aka NAQIA). Checking in to Kavieng in March, we took our paperwork to the Health Quarantine office and filled out a paper and paid 56 Kina and got our clearance. Apparently there is no Health Quarantine office in Kavieng, as no one told us to do that.

In Rabaul in August, the Customs person told us we needed to be cleared by Quarantine before she could do our paperwork (but the Q guy didn't come to the YC until 2 hours later). They finally did our paperwork anyway, but waited around until the Q officers showed up.

Plant Quarantine cost 56 Kina. We had to fill out a form indicating no cargo, no live plants, and no animals. They stamped it and gave it to us.



Health Quarantine wanted us to have filled out a Maritime Declaration of Health form (it's an internationally regulated form downloadable as a PDF from the IMO website, google it). In lieu of that, he had the captain write on a blank piece of paper something like "To the best of my knowledge all crew are healthy and disease free", and sign and stamp it with our boat stamp. We paid 120 Kina for this clearance.

#### **From the Customs Website (late 2018):**

Customs does not levy any charge for Customs and Immigration clearance. However, Quarantine operates on a full cost recovery basis.

#### Quarantine

You must declare all food, plant and animal items on your incoming Passenger Card. A Papua New Guinean Quarantine officer will inspect your galley stores and other quarantinable items to ensure that they do not include goods or items infested with insects or disease. These could harm Papua New Guinea's unique environment or introduce plant, animal or human, pest or diseases.

Goods of quarantine concern may be surrendered for destruction or treated at your expense. If your vessel has an animal on board you must remain at a mid-water mooring or anchorage and keep the animal secure for the duration of your stay in Papua New Guinea.

Please ensure that all waste is securely contained on your vessel and made ready for removal by the Quarantine officer. If you declare items of quarantine concern, you may be given the option of re-exporting them at your expense.

If you do not declare items of quarantine concern you could be prosecuted.

To help keep marine pests out of Papua New Guinea before you leave your last port we ask that you voluntarily adopt a bio protection strategy by:

Keeping all ancillary gear and internal seawater systems clean of marine pests and growths; and

Cleaning your vessels' hull where possible before arrival; or

Applying antifouling paint within one year before arrival.

#### ***1.5.7 Stopping Before Officially Clearing In***

**Soggy Paws – February 2019:** While the official policy is that you must clear in before transiting the coast of PNG, because Vanimo is a dicey spot in the west, most cruisers clear in and out of Kavieng, and hop along the outer islands, without any problems.

Likewise, heading south to the Solomons, we cleared out of Rabaul and spent nearly a week making our way south (New Ireland, Buka, Bouganville) before actually leaving PNG waters.

### **1.5.8 Pets**

### **1.5.9 Inter-Country Clearances**

**Soggy Paws – August 2019:** Customs wants you to clear in and out of major ports. We cleared from Kavieng to Rabaul, and from Rabaul to Kimbe, and Kimbe to Manus. No cost and not a lot of hassle.

### **1.5.10 Clearing Out**

**Obiwan – Sep 2022:** We cleared in in Alotau and as part of the clearing in process, we were allowed to also clear out. All the officers were very kind and helpful, the boss of custom is a nice Lady called Sarah Mogi +67570048032. She gave us her telephone number and told us to call her if we had any problems.

With Sarah we managed to clear in and out of the country at the same time. She simply asked us which date we wanted her to put on our clear out. So we could visit all the Luisiades and then sail north to Budi Budi and from there directly to Solomons Islands.

**Soggy Paws – March 2019 – Clearing out of Rabaul:** We cleared both Customs and Immigration with the Customs guy who handles Rabaul Port. He stamped our passports out, and to complete Immigration clearance, we needed to send the same “Small Crafts” Excel file that we sent to Immigration to announce our pending arrival. (We forgot to do this for a week and were scolded by Immigration, by email). We paid no departure tax.

From the Government website 2018 (edited to remove references only applying to PNG registered vessels):

**Passenger Movement Charge:** Passengers on board may be required to pay a Departure Tax - this is currently K30.

**Clearance:** Before departure from Papua New Guinea, Customs and Immigration clearance is required. This is available at any Customs port. Customs should be contacted in advance to avoid unnecessary delay. It is an offence to depart without clearance.

**Requirements for Departure:** Passports and completed Outgoing Passenger card for all persons on board.

**Heritage Items:** It is illegal to take out of Papua New Guinea, without a permit, items identified as being of great importance to Papua New Guinea's national heritage. These items can include a vast array of objects from works of art and archeological finds, to objects associated with our history such as Second World War relics. Further information can be sourced from the National Museum.

**Wildlife:** Exportation of endangered and threatened (animal and plant) wildlife and Papua New Guinean native wildlife is strictly regulated and in some cases is illegal. Information and permits regarding the exportation of wildlife and products made from them is available from the Department of Conservation.

All permits must be obtained before you leave Papua New Guinea. Severe penalties apply for offences against the International Trade (Flora and Fauna) Act.

**Adina – August 2015 – Checking Out at Vanimo:** Vanimo is a small town on the western end of mainland Papua New Guinea. Adina was there on 31st August 2015 to obtain our visas for Indonesia and to check-out from Papua New Guinea. The town has had security issues in the past so you need to take care both on land and on board. We arrived early and completed formalities within the day and did not stay overnight.

**Anchoring:** The bay is large and shallow and reasonably well protected in SE trade winds. Initially we anchored at 02 41.028S 141 17.86E near the dock as we had been advised the dock has security. We then had to move to enable a cargo ship to moor stern to the dock. We moved to 02 41.048S 141 17.591E. Holding was good in both places in mud and plastic bags.

If staying the night the Harbour Master (Levi.Langai@pngports.com.pg) advises yachts to anchor as close to the dock as possible. This area is well lit on shore and in his opinion the safest position in the bay and in theory they have guards. If there is no ship, you can ask to actually tie to the dock which is at 02 40.993S 141 17.896E

One of us stayed on the boat and one of went ashore.

**Getting ashore:** We took the dinghy to the right of the dock (when approaching from sea) which the local banana boats use – 02 40.991S 141 17.948E. This gets very shallow at low tide (less than 30cm for at least 20m from shore) so be careful if you leave your dinghy unattended. There was nowhere obvious that we could have chained the dinghy if we had wanted to.

**Harbour Master:** We were not required to complete any formalities with the Harbour Master himself but he was very helpful in helping us track down Customs and Immigration.

**Customs:** Customs are located inconveniently out of town. Ask the Harbour Master for help and he will get them to come to the dock or direct you to a taxi. Customs will want to see your check-in papers and will clear you out. It helps to mail Patrick Kinavai kinavaip@customs.gov.pg 24 to 48 hours in advance of your arrival. His number is 457 1192. Other yachts have had their passports stamped by customs so go here first and ask if they will do it for you. We went to immigration first as customs were unavailable.

**Immigration:** We found the Immigration Officer at the airport 02 41.210S 141 17.966E but he does move around! Ask the Harbour Master or Customs to try and contact him first. A departure card is all that is needed and your passports will be stamped.

**Other facilities:** There were a few basic shops in town plus a small fresh market. We did not spend any time looking for anything else!

## **1.6 Local Information and Customs**

### **1.6.1 Festivals**

For up to date information, see this website:

<http://www.papuanewguinea.travel/Events>

Morobe Show - Morobe Province, Lae – Late October

The Morobe show is an annual event hosted by the Morobe Provincial Agricultural Society, in Lae. The 2018 Morobe Show will be October 27th to 28th.

Crocodile Festival – East Sepik Province, Wewak – Early August

This special festival celebrates one of Papua New Guinea's famous tribal heartlands and the significance of the revered crocodile. 2018 Crocodile Festival is set for August 5th to 7th.

Kutubu Festival – Southern Highlands (Lake Kutubu) – Mid September

The 2017 Kutubu Kundu and Digaso festival offers a rare treat of fascinating cultural performances from the Southern Highlands against the backdrop of the stunning Lake Kutubu.

Mask Festival – East New Britain Province, Rabaul – Mid July

A cultural extravaganza set in Kokopo, featuring iconic mask performances from East New Britain.

Kenu & Kundu Festival – Milne Bay Province, Alotau – Late Oct or Early Nov

Stunning traditional canoes and 'kundus' feature prominently in this exciting cultural festival held in Alotau, Milne Bay Province.

Enga Show – Wabag Town – Early October

The 2018 Enga cultural show is tentatively set for August 10th to 12th in Wabag Town.

Jiwaka Cultural Show – Jiwaka Province – Early August

Location:

The Jiwaka Mini-Cultural Show returns August 4-5. Experience the unique Highlands cultural performances of Jiwaka Province.

[Read More](#)

Goroka Show [Goroka Show](#)

Date: 14/09/2018

Finish Date: 16/09/2018

Location: Eastern Highlands Province, Goroka

Experience PNG's biggest and most popular cultural festival - the 2018 Goroka Show, set for September 14th to 16th.

[Read More](#)

Hagen Show [Hagen Show](#)

Date: 17/08/2018

Finish Date: 19/08/2018

Location: Western Highlands Province, Mount Hagen

The 2018 Hagen Show is set for August 17th to 19th and returns to the old Kagamuga show grounds in Mount Hagen, Western Highlands Province.

[Read More](#)

Frangipani Festival [Frangipani Festival](#)

Date: 16/09/2018

Finish Date: 16/09/2018

Location:

The residents of Rabaul invite you to be part of the 2018 Frangipani Festival: September 16th. The festival celebrates the rebirth of Rabaul after the 1994 volcanic eruptions:

### **1.6.2 Security Issues**

**Obiwan – Sep 2022:** After hearing about the bad experience of SV Screensaver we were a bit worried about our time in PNG. At the resort we meet a nice girl called Angie +61427441266. She is a touristic guide specialized in cruising. When we meet her, she had just finished a cruise on a big Australian super yacht.

So we asked her where it was safe for us to anchor and where is was not.

Se told us to skip all the Milne Bay area, especially the north side. She told us the 3 island north of Alotau (Goodenought Is, Fergusson IS., and Normanby Is.) could be dangerous for us.

All of the Luisiades, starting from the South End of Milne Bay are safe.

We never felt in danger and that area, everybody was kind and welcoming and nobody attempted to board at night.

Our decision was not to allow anybody to come onboard, with some rare exceptions with some persons we had known for some days that were allowed to sit in our cockpit.

At beginning we were scared about people coming to our boat in their canoe with a very severe face, and not answering to our smiles with smiles. Then we understood that they are not rude but simply very shy. After they chat a bit with us their smiles started to rise.

**Screensaver - Sep 2022 – Kandrian, New Britain Violent Attack:** Approximately 1am four people boarded Screensaver, the leader was armed with a locally made gun, that fortunately failed to fire. He led the charge with head down gun aimed at me. Had he not been armed I would have let them have what they wanted. As it was clear I couldn't defend against them (3 inside 1 waiting in the boat) and the leaders charge and subsequent attempted firing convinced me I had nothing to lose.

The fight ensued, (I had a machete) but of course I had no chance of holding them off. The leader lost his gun when I struck it on the initial charge and he never got to retrieve it during the fight, only in departure. While I was dealing with the leader another was bashing me on the back and head with some sharp heavy impellent. The third one was making my partner, Yanina, hand over phones and wallets. I had a fake wallet out since being in PNG, so in that regard they got old expired credit cards and about 10kina, along with 4 phones. As soon as they departed, we also left.

I am short a few more teeth, have the first black eye in my life, my face was pummelled, lost more teeth. My back and back of the head has many lacerations with much blood loss, but otherwise depending on whether there is any internal bleeding, I believe I might be ok. Yanina

was also struck once very hard on the arm giving her a few lacerations and forced to sit down, and hand over the items while they beat on me. She was not harmed in any other way.

As a net result I would not advise anyone to come this way any longer unless you are well armed and familiar with its use.

### Kandrian Location

The place of the attack was Kandrian, SW New Britain. We did not hang around for fear they might return, so we departed straight away, and attempted to stop my bleeding. There are no medical facilities there of better help than what we have on board. We did not go to Rabaul, as I feared it may have been overtaken by the creeping violence that has spread out of Port Moresby recently.

**Field Trip – July 2018:** After living and cruising for 8 months in the Solomons and four months in Papua New Guinea, I thought I would share some general thoughts for future sailors heading this way.

There are three general categories of theft:

- Opportunistic 'Grab and Go' - Generally this consists of items stolen off the deck of boat left in plain sight and unsecured. This includes snorkels, masks, clothes drying on line, fishing rods, etc. This can occur at anytime, but usually at night while the crew is sleeping.
- Forced entry - Breaking a lock and stealing something that is secured on the vessel.
- Violent theft - Using machete or other weapon to rob the boat while occupants are onboard.

PNG is similar to the Solomons in most respects regarding security. There is however a significant cultural difference. Solomon islanders as a people are generally non-confrontational, and less likely to be violent. They tend to shy away and avoid face to face confrontation of any sort. This is not as true of PNG, especially in the north and around the larger islands and cities.

We've talked to many people, including expats in the Solomons and PNG that confirmed this view. PNG is more like the 'Wild Wild West' with guns, shootings, and physical altercations than the Solomons.

In PNG we are only aware of one incident in 2017 that involved armed robbery on a yacht and that was in Vanimo. Some friends of ours were robbed during the night at gunpoint for money. A scary proposition. Vanimo is a location that is known for problems, and sailors have been advised now for years to not spend the night in the harbor, but do a day trip to clear in or out of customs, get visas - and depart. We would completely avoid Vanimo unless you need a visa for Indonesia.

**Alk – May 2016:** We felt absolutely safe in PNG and people were friendly wherever we anchored. That said, we never visited any of the bigger cities which all have 'rascal' problems except for Alotau. But be prepared for inquisitive, friendly visitors in canoes even in the most remote locations who want to trade veggies/fruit for fish hooks, lines etc. Occasionally villagers traded for money so bring small denomination notes of Kina.

**Surya – August 2015 - Boarding and Attack – Hansa Bay:** While anchored in Hansa Bay (04 11.7 N 144 53.3 E) in Madang Province, between Madang and Wewak, northeast of Bogia.

We were boarded by 2 men armed with machetes. A violent confrontation followed with the boarders intent on killing or seriously wounding the crew. The two attackers were thrown overboard, but not before inflicting a serious wound to the forearm of the captain.

Please be extra vigilant and well prepared when cruising mainland PNG. The local village people were very helpful and the wound was stitched at the local clinic. The attackers were from another area.

**Free Bird – December 2014:** Some good advice I got before leaving Australia is to ask the first couple of visitors to come to the boat after anchoring is (a) is it ok to anchor here? and (b) are there any rascals in the area? You want to get a yes and a no for answers. If you get anything else, leave.

Asking about the anchoring can prevent someone demanding money after you've been there for a couple of days or at least give you a good excuse for not paying.

When going ashore always take some small gifts to give away if the need arises. When meeting chiefs or elders a cigarette or two is expected and brings much goodwill.

**Segue – December 2014 – Rabaul:** A note on security: Some cruisers have anchored off Kokopo, but it is NOT recommended. There is a lot of "banana boat" traffic from here to the nearby Duke of York islands -- and as recently as this week, a cruiser was assaulted on board and had some items stolen. Rabaul, on the other hand is more secure -- especially in front of the yacht club where there is 24/7 security monitoring the anchorage.

### **1.6.3 Anchorage Ownership**

**Screensaver – 2017:** So far all the Islands we have been to in PNG they are very quick to tell you they own the Islands, the water and the reef's. These are portrayed as traditional land ownership rights, recognised by PNG. I thought the point of the statement might be a lead in to asking for money, but it seems that was my pessimistic westerner hat because they don't ask for money.

**Free Bird – December 2014:** Some good advice I got before leaving Australia is to ask the first couple of visitors to come to the boat after anchoring is (a) is it ok to anchor here? and (b) are there any rascals in the area? You want to get a yes and a no for answers. If you get anything else, leave.

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### **1.6.4 Languages**

**Endless Summer – 2011:** One of the very unique things about PNG is that there are over 800 languages spoken in the country. Most of those who have gone to school speak at least a little English. Otherwise, the only common language they have is Pidgin, which is a weird derivative



of English. So, all over Kavieng there are signs often in Pidgin. My favorite was a sign advertising coffee and the Pidgin word on the sign said "kick-start-em-day" (not how it was written, but that's the phonetic result); that cracked me up.

### **1.6.5 Betelnut**

**Endless Summer – 2011:** Betelnut is a slightly intoxicating and addictive root that they mix with lime and mustard and chew. Nearly everyone there, men and women alike, had red lips and red teeth from chewing betelnut and the ground is full of what look like blood stains because everyone spits it everywhere! It's not a good look!

### **1.6.6 Shell Money**

**Anui – 2011:** Bagie is the shell money traditionally and currently used in PNG. It is formed from shells gathered from the reef and then shaped by hand into small coral-coloured discs that are threaded onto rope along with decorative shells and seeds.

Bagie are still used for purchasing brides, livestock and other items between the islands. Each length of bagie has a specific value. I traded for dozens of them, most of which I modified into long necklaces, but a couple of which we kept in their traditional form. My son has a very cool bagie of his own, after a man came to trade and accidentally dropped his necklace into the water. Seth dived and found it and the man insisted on giving it to him – so kind, as the bagie are a very valuable item.

### **1.6.7 Trading**

**Adina – 2015 – Trading in the South Pacific:** We found trading a great way to engage with the local people living on many of the islands we stopped at in the South Pacific. In the more remote islands trading with yachts has become a way for these people to source supplies they need but can't access. It is also a way for yachts to source fresh fruit and vegetables; at times we would be several weeks between main towns and therefore relied upon trading for our fresh supplies.

Our trading started in some of the remote islands in the east of Fiji, continued throughout Vanuatu and became a part of our everyday life in the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea (PNG). People would paddle out to Adina with fresh produce from their garden, whatever was in season at the time. In the Solomon Islands people also wanted to trade carvings and woven baskets and bags. At some islands we were able to "order" crayfish for trading. Sometimes we traded as we walked through villages. We never went short of fresh fruit and vegetables!

#### **HOW WE WENT ABOUT TRADING**

We always tried to make sure we traded fairly, giving back equivalent or more than we were being given. We looked at prices in shops and at the fresh market at the first town we arrived at in each country to gauge this. For example, in the Solomons we saw that a kilo of rice or flour cost around SBD15, whilst bundles of vegetables at the market were either SBD5 or 10 depending on the size of bundle. So if we were given a decent bundle of two or three different vegetables together we knew it was worth at least one kilo of rice.

We always traded with the first person to come to the boat in each place we anchored, even if we did not need or want what they offered. We felt this was the right way to start our relationship with the village.

We always asked the trader what they would like in return. In some places they would simply say "it's up to you" and in others they would be specific. If we had what they wanted we would give it. Sometimes this would mean we'd give them more than they'd asked for to ensure we gave a fair trade whilst others might get lucky, for example getting a t-shirt for a bunch of bananas. For the shy, we would prompt them with the types of things we had and if they still wouldn't say what they wanted we'd tend to give them rice and corned beef as we knew these were favoured items.

We would tell traders if there was anything we were looking for, to see if they had it or anyone else in the village did, emphasising the need for small portions "as we are only two people". In the Solomons we often asked for eggs and found that people wanted money rather than a trade, which was fine by us.

We always traded with children regardless of what they brought us. Sometimes this would be a pair of coconuts, a few oranges or as extreme as twelve papayas and a bird as we experienced at one anchorage! If the children brought a lot of produce, clearly from their parents' garden, we'd give something for them (biscuits, a ball, hair bands) and something for them to take to their parents (rice, corned beef). If there were lots of children in the canoe together bringing a small offering, such as a couple of coconuts between them, we'd give them a packet of biscuits to share. Unfortunately some children would throw biscuit packaging in the sea despite us asking them not to, so we started asking for the packaging back or gave the biscuits out one by one to each child to avoid giving packaging at all.

Another yacht we met said they made popcorn when there were many children coming to visit, but had the same issue with the plastic bags they used to distribute it. We found children the most entertaining traders, some returning multiple times with different produce to see what goodies they could get from us! In many places children were asking for pencils and exercise books for their school work which we happily gave.

Occasionally we did say no to adult traders. In some anchorages we were inundated and it would have been mad to trade for everything that was offered. In these instances we would politely tell the trader we already had more than enough, thank them for coming to see us and ask them to tell others we now had enough of the fruit or vegetable in question. We would also tell them if there was anything else we were keen to trade for.

**Making "tok-tok":** Some traders would come to the boat and simply want to trade, paddling straight back to the village. Others would want to stay and chat, or float a little way off Adina just watching us work or looking at things on the yacht. We never had a problem with this as we found people generally to be very well meaning and simply inquisitive. We would always make time to talk - you are curious about them, you should expect them to be curious about you and talking is an important part of life to the islanders.

We found that certain items would become popular in a particular village. For example, we would trade children's pants with one person and half an hour later have two more canoes at the boat asking to trade for pants too - it was as if word had got out that we had pants on board!

Packaging is precious! If someone gave us their produce in a plastic bag, no matter how small, we always emptied it and gave it back to them. Bags of any size are valuable in remote islands! We often gave our trade in a bag to ensure it would get to shore still dry. And we gave the larger rice/flour sacks away - these are valuable items for transporting produce from the gardens and in some places are made into shoulder bags and school bags.

We would always carry a few items for trading in our rucksack when we went ashore to enable us to trade if we met someone with vegetables. These items also doubled as potential gifts to give to a chief if it was our first time going in to the village.

Save some things for the next village. We found some villages would quite happily have traded until we were empty, but you always have to think there is another village ahead and people there who will also be desperate to trade with you. So be careful and save trading goods for throughout your trip.

Trading and not just giving. We followed this rule as we believe giving alone sets a bad precedent as islanders will then expect the next yacht to do the same and in time it could cause problems. Similarly we learnt not to hand things over for a trade on the expectation of the person returning with their trade as the few times we did it, they never returned. That said, we had a golden rule that if anyone genuinely needed medicine or school material we would happily give it to them.

#### WHAT WE TRADED

We carried a selection of items purchased specifically for trading. At times we also traded from items we had on board for ourselves. The list below is exhaustive; we've annotated the most popular items with stars.

Food items:

Rice\*

Sugar\*

Flour

Tea bags

Coffee

Corned beef tins\*

Salt

Powdered milk

Sweet biscuits\*

We would bulk buy rice, flour and sugar in sacks and re-bag into one kilo bags. Over the first three months of the 2015 season when we spent time in north Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and east Papua New Guinea, we traded approximately 60kg of rice, 15kg of flour and 10kg of sugar. We could have traded more sugar if we had been carrying it. To try to avoid issues with weevils we bought the sacks of rice and flour at main towns as we went along, rather than buying it all at the start of the season.

Household items:

Washing powder for clothes\*

Matches

Cutlery

Cooking utensils (wooden)

Plates, bowls and mugs (plastic)

Stationery:

Biros

Colouring pencils\*

Pencils\*

Pencil sharpeners

Exercise books\*

Fishing materials:

Small hooks for trolling when paddling a canoe\*

Medium hooks for trolling from a banana boat

Fishing line\*

Small plastic squids (called "bait" in many islands)

Toys for children:

Small bouncing balls\*

Skipping ropes

Hair bands (in pretty colours)\*

Small toy cars

Swimming goggles\*

Balloons

Bubble blowers

Clothing:

Ladies t-shirts, shorts (to the knee) and sarongs\*

Men's t-shirts and shorts

Children's pants, t-shirts and shorts\*

Flip-flops

Small bottles of perfume for the ladies

We had a mixture of new and pre-worn clothes; people were perfectly happy to trade pre-worn clothes in good condition. We'd agree with the trader what type of clothing they wanted then

show them a few options in about the right size to allow them to choose. This was particularly pleasing to the girls and children!

Solomon Islands only, for carvers:

Sandpaper of all grades\*

Superglue\*

Wood glue

Carving tools

Carving is big business in the Solomon Islands and we found these items to be things the carvers really wanted and actually seemed to expect yachts to be carrying to trade with them. We found we were able to negotiate combined money/trading item deals for the carvings we wanted.

### SOURCING ITEMS FOR TRADING

Whilst the list above looks long, we found just a few trips to different shops enabled us to set ourselves up. We then topped up in main towns along the way if we needed to.

We bought clothing in budget stores in New Zealand. We bought food items in bulk from wholesale shops to get the best prices – BonMarche Wholesale in Port Vila, Vanuatu was our main source for this. The rest of the non-food items we bought from Chinese shops in Port Vila, similar to those you find in many main cities in the South Pacific countries.

When buying in bulk, as we often were, we would ask for a discount and were usually given 5% or 10% discount.

We also always keep any items we no longer want that we think might be useful to islanders and these became trading items, for example old fins and diving masks.

[www.yachtadina.co.uk](http://www.yachtadina.co.uk)

**Yawana – 2015 – Trading in PNG & Solomons:** I visited a number of isolated islands in PNG and the Solomon Islands in 2014-15.

I made a strong point of explaining to islanders that I am not a charity. I carried goods on board for exchange and trade only, and this helped to establish a feeling of mutual respect between us that led to many rewarding friendships. I exchanged the following goods for fresh food, woodcarving and locally made jewellery. I ate a ridiculous amount of fresh crayfish.

General

Apart from second hand clothes, T-shirts etc. I also brought:

- old spectacles found in the 2nd hand shops
- hats
- cooking utensils
- small garden lights with mini solar panel found in hardware stores (buy the good ones as the rechargeable battery lasts longer)
- diving goggles and fins (even old 2nd hand gear is very useful)

- old sails to be recut and used on the dugout canoes
- needles and whipping thread to sew the sails
- silicon and sikaflex to repair cracks in the canoes and rainwater tanks
- cheap fibreglass bog to repair larger holes
- small re sealable plastic containers (yogurt and mayonnaise etc.) to make waterproof storage for islanders who spend a lot of time at sea in exposed canoes
- woodworking tools (saws, chisels, rasps, hand drills and metal files). These can be found in junkyard sales and bought cheaply as we now live in the age of the power tool.

**Medical supplies:** Like antibiotic cream, is very useful and will go a long way. There are some medical officers on the islands, but they are poorly trained and have limited resources. Ringworm is rampant through these islands and if you can afford to buy bulk anti fungal cream then take plenty with you. I was often asked for aspirin and paracetamol, but they were eaten like lollies so I stopped giving them.

If you feel comfortable administering antibiotics and anti materials then do, but if something goes wrong you may find yourself in a very difficult position. Consult with immediate family and the village chief and explain the risks beforehand.

**Food:** Goods like white rice in 1 kilo packets, white sugar, white flour, canned tuna, 2 minute noodles, and cooking oil were very welcome on the outer islands as these are very expensive for them to buy and make a change from eating yams and taro. This "cargo" can be bought cheaply in the larger towns like Rabaul, Alotou, and Honiara when you clear in.

Likewise, fishing hooks and line can be bought in bulk very cheaply, small diving goggles, dry biscuits, bush knives, submersible dive torches and flip flops (called "slippers") can all be purchased at the large Chinese run trade stores in the big towns.

**Children:** For the children take pens (biro's) and textbooks, coloured pens. Don't take sweets if you expect to get any peace and quiet. I offered them biscuits instead. In exchange I would ask them to sing me a song in their local language, I recorded it on my iPad then played it back to them. They were mesmerised to see themselves on video and fascinated to watch clips of other children from neighboring Islands.

**Women:** For the women take soap and laundry powder, shampoo, brightly coloured clothes (not too revealing), sports bras, thread and needles, hair elastics and combs.

**Men:** For the men take board shorts, hats (they spend a lot of time at sea), strips of stretchy rubber for their fishing spears, any metal that can be fashioned into a barb for the spears, cigarette lighters, newspaper for rolling cigarettes (they grow their own tobacco), torches, head torches, and batteries.

Do not expect expressions of gratitude and thanks on the scale we give in our culture. Even a significant gift or service rendered to someone may be met with minimal response, and more than likely a request for something more is made. You are dealing with people of a different culture and they have their own ways. It was enough for me to be aware that I was helping these people in some small way.

I did not take any alcohol for exchange. I always refused if I was asked for it. I never allowed anyone to come on board after dark.

**Totem – October 2012:** In Panasia Island we began to experience the rich Louisiades trading culture. Islands actively trade together, and visiting boats are of interest for the goods they bring from outside. Where islands specialize based on their available resources- clay pots made on Utian, canoes from the wood on Panaeti, lime for betel on Sabra, shells for bagi (for currency and ritual trade) on Nimoa and Rossel- cruisers offer staples otherwise sourced from distant trade stores for exchange.

Small villages, with a handful of families, live in homes of wood frame and coconut frond thatching. Footpaths connect one village with another. Sailing canoes traverse between islands, and here at Panasia, from one side to the other: the water route is easier to traverse than the paths through very steep limestone slopes. Unlike the rest of the coconut run we have sailed, these islands do not have a cash economy. There is no ubiquity to modern infrastructure or stores; trading goods is the primary method to satisfy needs for anything that cannot be grown or made from what is immediately at hand.

When we arrive, we make a gift of fish to the family on shore. We're guests in their waters, and a "one for us, one for them" standard is used. Even though few families live here on Panasia, we have a stream of dugout canoes stopping by Totem. Seeing our sail as we progressed closer, they come in outriggers not just from the adjacent shore but around from the opposite side of the island, and an adjacent island where gardens are kept. Visitors bring what they have to offer: coconuts, papaya, sweet potatoes, eggs, cherry tomatoes, lobster. We're asked for clothing (especially for children), rice, sugar, or batteries to power the lanterns and radios at home.

We're learning from boats who have spent years here how this trading has changed as the number of visiting boats has increased. There is more of an expectation that cruisers will give without reciprocation from islanders- a break from their mutual trade tradition, "pem penpewa". It's easy to see how this happens. You may already have traded for more bananas than you can eat, but someone is offering more and they clearly seem to need the t-shirt being requested, why not?

Although we might think we're a little shabby, our boat and basic gear represent immense wealth to an islander- from their point of view, why not ask for something you need? Although trading is a way of life, so is "hol hol", the obligation between relatives to give what you have if it's requested of you (not surprisingly, most trade stores are not run by locals, but by Chinese or other non-local ethnicities who do not have to submit to this).

One enterprising man comes with a prepared list of desired items. He seems a little surprised when we ask what he has for us in return, but laughs and jumps into trading mode when we use the Misima dialect terms for his tradition- "u pem, ya pewa" (you give, I give).

We have our trading training wheels on, but are getting into the rhythm. One trade at a time, we are finding out how to balance being fair with being generous, and be respectful guests in this beautiful place.

<http://www.sailingtotem.com/2012/10/panasia-island-trading-101-in-our.html>

And a later article about trading:

We knew trading would be part of the experience of cruising in Papua New Guinea, but failed to appreciate just how much. For trading in the Louisiades, here's what I would like to have seen gathered in one place before we left. This is based on our admittedly limited experience, through the western islands in the Louisiades- from Panasia through the Deboyne group- and Budi Budi atoll.

First, understand that trading is deeply ingrained as part of the culture: it is expected. Where there are no stores, and effectively no cash economy, trading is how many needs are satisfied. At the same time, there is a great deal of need. It's tempting just to give a pair of shorts to the naked kid that paddles out to your boat. We think that even when we are basically giving charity here, the formality of making a trade is still important...so while we didn't try to drive hard bargains, we did stick to trading. When a dugout with three children come out with a pretty shell, a few green cherry tomatoes, and big smiles- some might call me a sucker, but if they want clothes- they all get clothes. They want rice? They get rice. But when the young fellow with a mobile phone and a watch shows up and presents a list of the things he would like visiting boats to give him, we wonder about the precedents that have been set, and just ask what he has to offer in trade.

So, what do people ask for? What do they need? Here's what we heard the most.

**Food staples:** flour, sugar, and rice are the most common requests; also, yeast, onions and powdered milk.

**Clothing:** smaller children's clothing especially, but shirts (nothing sleeveless!) for all, longer shorts for boys, skirts to knee length for girls, and mid-calf for women. I did not consider or realize how conservative and modest the norm for dress would be, and many items in my stash to give or trade aren't useful except for the cloth they are made from. We took donations from friends and our children's classmates in Australia and have given away a large portion of our own wardrobes. For boats coming from Australia, ask at Salvos, Vinnies and Lifeline about bulk purchases. Many op-shops will sell clothing at a very low price-per-bag or price-per-kilo if you explain why you are collecting it.

**Cotton cloth, elastic bands, needles and thread(aka "cotton"):** a great deal of clothing is made by hand. Yardage of cotton cloth would have been a really great thing to bring. A dozen meters of elastic- so cheap at Lincraft!- would be gold. Most skirts/shorts for children and women, and many tops, are made by hand with these basic materials. I really wish I had appreciated this before we left.

**School supplies for schools-** dictionaries and books were especially appreciated, and the supplies mentioned below were all gratefully received. Our early reader books were a big hit, since most instruction puts the kids into a crash course in English: teachers are often from different islands and don't teach in the local dialect. Schools are reasonably supplied with exercise books and writing instruments, all things considered, but still strikingly sparse compared to what we expect.

**School supplies for everyone else-** exercise books / workbooks, biros (pens), pencils and erasers were often requested in trade. The schools themselves are often reasonably supplied with these, but it is a limited part of the population that actually attends school. Many children drop out very young: schooling beyond year 2 in many islands often means living for the duration of the term on another island, and fees are hard to meet for people who don't live in a



cash economy- both hardships for a family. But the pastor may need a notebook to help plan their Sunday school program. A carver wants a notebook to use for basic correspondence and to keep a record of his work and sales. A child who isn't able to attend school still wants to practice writing. None of these people have ready access to writing tools.

**Fish hooks and fishing line.** Different places sought different size hooks; hooks are asked for more than line.

**Hand tools for woodworking:** large planes, chisels, metal files, handsaws, drill bits, clamps, axes, adz... a hand drill would be invaluable. I keep thinking of the men I met selling old hand tools on the sidewalk south of Kangaroo Point for just a few dollars, and wish I'd picked up a boxful. These are high value trade items.

**Batteries:** primarily D-cells. Only a few people asked about any other size. D-cells are used to power radios for news, and lanterns for evening light. We brought too many AA and AAAs, which hardly anyone wants, and not enough Ds, which we are consistently asked about.

**Solar or manually powered lights, radios, etc.** Devices that can be powered by an integral solar panel or manual crank is highly valued. You can get cheap garden solar lights to bring, but many of them are pretty light duty for "outdoor" gear- try to get something that will last.

**Magazines.** Magazines offer a glimpse into the outside world for people without regular external media. I really wish I'd gotten that stack of cheap National Geographic magazines spotted in a thrift store before we left Australia; they would have been gold.

**Flashlights and headlamps.** After lollies and balloons, a torch is the first thing children ask for- coached by their parents on that count I'm pretty sure! In a place where darkness falls early, anything that helps extend usable hours of the day is valuable.

We were asked a couple of times for **Bibles**, especially the NIV (New International Version). Carrying Bibles isn't really our gig, but that might be helpful for others to know.

**Boat gear.** The following may be particularly valued in Panapompom and Brooker, as canoes are made in the Deboyne group, but the waga / solaus are used all over. We were asked for:

Marine paint – not necessarily bottom paint; anything for the sailing canoes

Nails

Retired sails, or plastic tarp to use for outrigger sails and for shelters

Hand sewing needles for sails, and 1/2mm nylon or synthetic twine to use

We think a quality synthetic small diameter line (like Robline) would be very valuable for the lashing in outriggers

"Silicone"- really, sikaflex 395, 3M 4200, or similar stuff for joined hulls. Many of the outriggers leak like sieves and there's often at least one person on board who is continuously bailing

**Line-** One fisherman on Brooker, Frank, was seriously jazzed to trade a couple of bagi for a strand of new polypro line. Ruben so happy to get one of our old halyards and immediately put it into service as a mainsheet on his family's canoe (their old poly line was hardened and cut into the fishermen's hands)

Other things we've been asked for:

printing or copying photographs, sending email. It's such an easy thing for us to do with what we have on board, but can be so helpful to someone without these capabilities

Baby bottles. I am a deep believer in extended nursing, so I cringe to say suggest a bottle. But the practical reality is that sometimes it's not possible, and mixed with the plump cherubs there are some very skinny babies here who might be helped by a bottle- they're drinking water from coconuts. Another mother I spoke to tended her gardens on a very steep hillside, without any shelter; a bottle made it easier for her to leave baby with father/sibling/aunties for a few hours to work growing yams

Bedding. Most bedding is just a pandanus mat to lie on. we were asked a couple of times for a sheet or a baby blanket

One thing we haven't been asked for directly, but which would be a great aid, is mosquito netting. Treated nets can be readily acquired at low cost through charity organizations (skip the camping stores, they are outrageous!), and would be a great thing to have for gift/trade. On Budi Budi, malaria is endemic but there is no health facility and many people do not have mosquito nets. Getting medical care means going to Woodlark Island, which in their sailing canoes takes one full day/night IF you have the right wind...and several days if you don't. This all means that people here, and children in particular, die unnecessarily from malaria for want of a cheap bit of netting.

### **Later reminisces on "fair trading"**

December 21, 2012

How to handle trading was probably one of the top ten questions I had before we went cruising. Even having the experience of living overseas in places where prices are always negotiable, haggling isn't something that comes naturally to me- as I suspect it doesn't for a lot of Americans; it's not part of our culture. Trading as a cruiser was a mystery.

It turned out that trading was not necessary or routine in most of the places we visited on the path to Mexico and then the coconut milk run to Australia: the countries we went through had cash economies, and provide even remote islands with access to goods. The notable exception where trading opened doors was in the Tuamotues for pearls... stash some rum for that!

As soon as we started down the less traveled path through Papua New Guinea, everything changed. But the trading we did in PNG's islands was not about hard bargaining. We had things people wanted, they had things we wanted, and it was a matter of putting those things forward until an agreement is reached. There is no haggling, really: this is very low stress compared to, say, a handicraft market in South Africa.

In a typical scenario, someone would arrive at Totem with fresh fruit or vegetables, or maybe eggs, or the offer to catch lobster. I'd find out what they want- food? clothing? fishing hooks? Then, offer what feels right from our stores based on their interests. For a basket gorgeous papayas, a kilo bag of sugar? For a half dozen carefully peeled drinking coconuts, a handful of small hooks? OK. Or, not OK. If the person you're trading with wants something different, or wants more, they'll tell you. Maybe they need a new band for a spear gun, maybe they need nails. For the most part, people were very reasonable- not trying to work us over for the best possible deal, just trying to work something out.

Where trading was sometimes less enjoyable was with people who would come asking for things, over and over, and have little to offer. Well, there's no obligation to trade at all- so just say no thanks, and be done. There were a few anchorages where we were bothered by people who seemed to think that if they just kept asking, eventually we'd be worn down and submit. I'm sure that's worked before, but we try to avoid setting or reinforcing that kind of precedent.

Trading for the beautiful model of the outrigger sailing canoe was more involved than the usual boatside veggie exchange. The artist wanted kina, PNG's currency, but we didn't have any (this was weeks before we cleared into the country, and hadn't seen a paved road or stores yet...but that's another story!). So Jamie spent about two hours sitting in the cockpit one morning, offering things to the Rubin, until he'd reached a level of goods that represented an acceptable trade. Jamie would keep going through things we had available to trade, or Rubin would ask for something he wanted, and eventually a deal was struck. It was a pile of stuff, from a snorkeling mask to line and tools and more, but we didn't exceed what felt like a fair threshold for the time and effort that went into creating this beautiful model. Everybody was happy.

If benchmarks help, think about what you'd pay to buy something if you could- and what it cost you to get what you're offering. Is that pineapple, which might be \$5, a fair trade for the 1 kg bag of sugar that might have cost you \$1.50? Yet while you can think about it in terms of the value of the items being exchanged, but think of it this way, too: when the ONLY way for you to get a fresh pineapple, and the ONLY way for them to get a bag of sugar, is to trade- so that isn't necessarily a great benchmark, but maybe a way of estimating how close or far you are from what's reasonable. We really found people to be very fair. I remember giving a guy in Kavieng a two kg bag of rice for a couple of lobsters one day. He was thrilled and insisted it was too much, then showed up the next day to give us three huge, beautiful papayas from his garden. Wow!

Oh, there were times when we made deliberately unbalanced trades. When a child has paddled miles with a handful of tiny tomatoes, or a pretty shell, and asked for things that represent basic needs for food and clothing- I'm happy to give. We didn't need another pretty shell, and those tiny green tomatoes weren't going to be any good, but we kept a stash of baggies that could be quickly filled with a small amount of rice or sugar or whatever was requested. How can you turn down a kid in rags who wants a t-shirt, and has paddled from a neighboring island with something they hoped you would want, when they saw your boat from afar?

Ultimately, if you're going to an area where you anticipate trading, research a little to find out what people will want. We raised the waterline with the volume of stuff brought on board in anticipation of trading. Most of it wasn't costly: staple foods, boxes of fishhooks. Clothes which we mostly expected to give away, and got both by purchasing from thrift stores, taking donations at the kids' schools, and paring down our own wardrobe. These things are then sunk costs to you, and you're not going to run down your kitty trading them...or worry to much about whether the bargain your striking is a fair one. It's going to work, or it's not!

**Unknown Boat – Unknown Date - Trade items:** rope and line of all types in small sizes, flour, sugar, rice, yeast in larger packets (the locals are restricted to small packets because it is used to make Jungle Juice) discreet enquiries will find someone glad to have it. Sewing supplies, fishing gear (small sizes), second hand clothes, especially for children (modest styles for women, people dress conservatively) . LED torches and batteries to suit (mostly AA). Diving masks, caps, sunglasses, reading glasses are much valued by older folk. Cordial or juice, biscuits and lollies are great for kids who come to the boat. Small, waterproof plastic containers

such as pills and vitamins come in are used for storing lime powder (used in chewing betel nut). Chisels or heavy bladed knives that can be fashioned into wood carving tools are highly valued in some places. Files for sharpening bush knives are the same. Even taking a decent file ashore and offering to sharpen bush knives for people is a great way to generate goodwill with people you meet. You may get asked for antibiotics by parents of sick children, or basic pain killers like ibuprofen.

### **1.6.8 Malaria**

**Totem – August 2013:** Papua New Guinea has sobering malaria statistics. It has the highest incidence of malaria in the Western Pacific. Internal problems with infrastructure, resources and funding give malaria victims an unnecessarily high mortality rate. We'll travel from PNG to Indonesia, and continued endemic malaria: it's not like anything we've experienced to date.

So it might seem strange that we're not going to take any anti-malarial drugs in PNG and Indonesia during our journeys in the coming year.

If you know us, you know we're not big risk takers. We recently visited a travel doctor as part of our preparations. We brought our bias to avoid prophylactics and were expecting to have to "discuss" it. To our relief, was consistent the advice she gave us.

What are we doing, then? Lots of preventative measures.

**Screening:** Repellent-treated nets and screens (we got ours in Australia from Buzz Off) on our hatches and ports. We have the screens and nets, and will soak them in a solution of permethrin. The treatment is supposed to be good for about a year, and we have enough to re-treat if it seems necessary.

We have additional nets, also treated, to drape our bunks at night. The romantic Out of Africa look is a bonus.

**Repellents:** Chemical free is best. We have little ultrasonic devices that are the size of a thumb. Battery powered, they emit a high pitch sound which mosquitoes don't like. They don't have a big range- just 8 or 10 feet- but that's enough most of the time.

Good ol' repellent lotion. First line of defence is based on essential oils; we have several to use.

As much as I hate using chemicals, especially directly on our skin, it's a risk trade off with malaria that we have to weigh. If we aren't finding success with the natural repellents, DEET based lotion is stashed too.

Coils. Hate em.... but have them, just hope not to use.

**Smart Behavior:** Avoid areas with lots of bugs (anchor awaaaaayyyy from the mangroves!)

Choose light colored clothing, not dark.

No perfume/fragrances. Easy, since we mostly think they literally stink.

Stay put from dusk to dawn. This is when malarial mosquitoes are primarily active; we'll plan our activity to try and ensure being inside the well screened boat during those times. Since we'll be in islands without power, I don't think it will be hard.

**Testing and Treatment:** And if we think anyone even MIGHT have malaria, test. We have 20 test kits (these are from Buzz Off, too): if anyone shows a sign of fever, they get tested. It's a simple finger prick that you measure on a card. Pleasantly dummy proof.

TREAT. If malaria is indicated, we begin treatment. There's enough Malarone on Totem for multiple courses. In fact, it's probably an overkill quantity. I'm OK with that.

Take off! We'd head for a clinic the second anyone is diagnosed. Just because we can handle starting treatment doesn't mean we think we should play doctor. Our medical kit is oversupplied if anything; the bigger problem then is the distance to a clinic that will have trained staff.

I can't help worst-case-scenarioing on this. What if Jamie and I are both infected? I know from experience it can make you completely non-functional. It's one of the reasons we're hoping to find buddy boats who are also headed on this route, which is a big stretch from the beaten path.

\* 2013 update: no malaria, but a few test kits were used during our time in PNG.

Update, 2013: we've had a lot of questions about our source for malaria test kits and mozzie nets. We got ours in Australia from Buzz Off. Besides the fact they had great prices, I liked supporting an organization that is focused on aid work- that's a nice place to know your dollars are going! If you're not in Australia, Google for local suppliers. The Buzz Off test kits were actually made by a New Jersey based pharma company.

### **1.6.9 Eating the Fish (Ciguatera!)**

**From Wikipedia – January 2019:** Ciguatera fish poisoning, also known simply as ciguatera, is a foodborne illness caused by eating reef fish whose flesh is contaminated with certain toxins. Ciguatera Fish Poisoning commonly occurs in tropical and subtropical areas, particularly in the Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean, and the Caribbean Sea.

Symptoms may include diarrhea, vomiting, numbness, itchiness, sensitivity to hot and cold, dizziness, and weakness. The onset of symptoms varies with the amount of toxin eaten from half an hour to up to two days. The diarrhea may last for up to four days.

Some symptoms typically remain for a few weeks to months. Heart difficulties such as slow heart rate and low blood pressure may also occur.

The specific toxins involved are ciguatoxin and maitotoxin. They are originally made by a small marine organism, *Gambierdiscus toxicus*, that grows on and around coral reefs in tropical and subtropical waters. These are eaten by herbivorous fish which in turn are eaten by larger carnivorous fish. The toxins become more concentrated as they move up the food chain.

Any reef fish can cause ciguatera poisoning, but species such as barracuda, grouper, red snapper, moray eel, amberjack, parrotfish, hogfish, sturgeonfish, kingfish, coral trout, and sea bass are the most commonly affected. Ciguatoxins are concentrated in the fish liver, intestines, heads, and roe.

Ciguatoxins do not affect the taste, texture, or odour of the fish and cannot be destroyed by cooking, smoking, freezing, salting or any other method of food preparation. Outbreaks can occur seasonally or sporadically, particularly after storms. Not all fish of a given species or from a given area will be toxic.

Preventive efforts include not eating reef fish, not eating high-risk fish such as barracuda, and not eating fish liver, roe, or fish heads. There is no specific treatment for ciguatera fish poisoning once it occurs. Mannitol may be considered, but the evidence supporting its use is not very strong. Gabapentin or amitriptyline may be used to treat some of the symptoms.

The US Centers for Disease Control estimates that around 50,000 cases occur a year. Other estimates vary up to 500,000 cases per year. It is the most frequent seafood poisoning. It occurs most commonly in the Pacific Ocean, Indian Ocean, and the Caribbean Sea between the latitudes of 35°N and 35°S. The risk of the condition appears to be increasing due to coral reef deterioration and increasing trade in seafood. The risk of death from poisoning is less than 1 in 1,000. Descriptions of the condition date back to at least 1511. The current name came into use in 1787.

**Soggy Paws** - I personally know someone who got a severe case in the Bahamas—3 boats shared the same large yellowtail snapper at a potluck. By morning, they were all very sick, and a couple of people from each boat were so sick that they were airlifted off for immediate hospitalization. They spent at least a month recovering, and even a year later were reporting lingering symptoms. As the toxin is cumulative, they can never eat another fish.

In the Tuamotus, locals told us “bring us the fish and tell us exactly where you caught it, and we will tell you if you can eat it.” However, locals do get ciguatera too!

In the Gambiers, the problem is much much worse—even traditionally “safe” fish can be highly toxic. A friend caught a grouper on his way out of the W pass, and ate it for dinner. He was very sick for the next 3 days as he was sailing single-handed northwards to the Tuamotus.

**Jacaranda:** Linda from s/v Jacaranda has compiled a much more comprehensive look at ciguatera. You can download it from their website, here:

<http://www.jacarandajourney.com/other-good-stuff>

Look for "You Gonna Eat That Fish?" Info about Ciguatera

### **1.6.10 Crocodiles**

**Noonsite – 2019:** Salt water crocodiles are native to many parts of Solomon Islands, and there are regular sightings on beaches, including those near Honiara. On arrival in any new place, ensure you ask locals whether there are any crocodiles.

Local advice should be sought before entering unfamiliar waters, including lakes. One yachtsman was taken by a croc just while checking his anchor.

### **1.6.11 Malignant Tropical Sores**

**Soggy Paws – Mar-Aug 2019 – Life Threatening Skin Infections:** A big warning to all yachties cruising in the SW Pacific (and Micronesia). Ourselves and nearly every boat we have met has had at least one incidence of a tiny wound or scratch (usually on the lower leg or foot) turning into a feverish oozing mess, requiring a full dose of heavy antibiotics (sometimes several courses). On our boat alone, with 2 crew and 6 months in this area, we have had a total of 5 of these infections.

At least one yachty we know was airlifted home to NZ when, after a month of battling the infection, it looked like the infection was winning.

LOSS OF LIFE AND LIMB IS POSSIBLE if you let one of these tropical infections get out of hand.

Take EVERY tiny cut, abrasion, or bug bite seriously, keep it clean and out of the water. At the first sign of it getting bigger, and red or hot, start taking antibiotics (something strong and broad spectrum like Ciproflaxin). Keep it elevated, and keep it covered (bring lots of good quality bandaids).

As for what to put on it, the locals swear by Noni Root, so we tried rotating application of the local Noni Root concoction, Betadine, triple anti-biotic ointment, and an Aussie antiseptic cream called Savlon. We were given a small bottle of Noni Root by someone we asked about what they did for infections. We also saw it for sale at several local markets in small bottles.

However, the US Army medical guide to Bacterial Skin Infections says that topical skin medicines like triple antibiotic ointment have little effect for these kinds of infections. This 1994 guide recommend Dicloxicillin, or ...*“Erythromycin and clindamycin are suitable alternatives if the patient is allergic to penicillin. Cephalosporins or combinations of amoxicillin and clavulanate may also be used, but are much more expensive and seldom offer an advantage over antistaphylococcal penicillins.”* They also state: *“Mupirocin is the only topical (put on the outside of the skin) medicine that has proven effective on mild infections.”* And *“Debridement of the lesions is helpful but soaking in hexachlorophene or other antibacterial soaks retards rather than enhances healing.”*

Another medical guide we have aboard also cautioned about daily use of hydrogen peroxide to clean the wound. Hydrogen peroxide is a good thing to use for the initial cleaning and disinfecting, but it will inhibit healing, and so should not be used for regular daily cleaning.

Sometimes it is difficult to tell whether your sore is getting better or worse... take a picture of it every day and compare results.

If it continues to get worse, and your surrounding skin is becoming hot and inflamed, or you are running a fever, it is getting to the dangerous stage. Seriously, even a tiny bug bite can become infected to the point where your life is in danger. Take it seriously!

Make sure you have several 7 day courses of Ciproflaxin aboard when cruising this area—even though there are hospitals and clinics in these areas, many times they have no available drugs. We found Cipro available over the counter in some pharmacies in PNG and the Solomons. Cipro is a heavy-duty broad spectrum antibiotic and should be reserved for use when nothing else is working.

A pharmacist in Honiara sold us packages of a 5-day dose of Cloxicillin 250mg (2 capsules 4 times a day for 5 days) for \$5 USD each package. He said to try that first, and then use Cipro (which is more expensive) if that doesn't seem to be working. I don't know if Amoxicillin would work, but if you have nothing else, it's probably better than nothing until you can get to somewhere with something stronger.

On our last round of infections, from small scratches acquired on a jungle hike to see airplane relics in Stirling Island, Solomons (Aug 2019), the Cloxicillin worked to start clearing up the sores within a couple of days.

## **1.7 Yachtsmen's Services - Overview**

### **1.7.1 Money**

**Soggy Paws – March 2019:** There is one bank in Kavieng (BSP) with 3 ATM's. Max we could get out at the ATM was K500 (about \$125 USD) and there was a K15 surcharge for foreign cards. You could do 2 transactions at one go, but you paid K15 each time.

In Rabaul, there is a BSP ATM at the big supermarket across from the post office, and several more at the BSP bank building around the corner. In the afternoons the ATM's often run out of money, especially on Fridays (and are then out all weekend and into Monday morning). So go get your cash in the mornings.

Several of the larger businesses accepted credit cards and would do cash back if you were desperate. This gave you a better exchange rate as you did not get charged the K15 ATM fee.

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** The cash situation in Kimbe is the same as other places we experienced in PNG (Rabaul, Kavieng). The primary bank is Bank of South Pacific, and there are at least 4 BSP ATM locations that we know of. I think there is also an ANZ Bank and a WestPac Bank in town, and I think both have ATM's.

Getting cash, however, is always a roll of the dice. If you don't get there early, there won't be any cash left. At 11am one day, on a diesel run, we had to hit 4 different ATM's (3 BSP and 1 Westpac) before we found one with cash. The main BSP bank in the center of town has 3-4 ATM's but that location was packed with people standing in line waiting for cash. Max 500 Kina per attempt was all we could get to work, and a 15 Kina charge for each 500K withdrawal. We were told, but haven't tried, that the big grocery stores will give you cash back on a credit card (that worked well in Rabaul when we were desperate).

The manager at Liamu Reef Resort also told us that her staff often goes out to get cash in the evenings. BSP probably restocks its cash machines in the late afternoon.

### **1.7.2 Diesel and Gasoline**

**Soggy Paws – September 2019:** We were able to buy diesel in Kavieng, Rabaul, Kimbe, and Manus (Lombrum or Lorengau). Kavieng was most expensive, Rabaul was cheaper, and Kimbe even cheaper. In Kavieng and Rabaul, it was possible to get diesel delivered to a dock in 200L drums (probably Kimbe too, but we don't know for sure). But we have had bad experiences in SE Asia getting fuel delivered in drums—sometimes it's good stuff and sometimes it is sludgy crap. So we prefer to go to the pump in town that is being used regularly by the townspeople.

In Kavieng, we walked our jugs up to the gas station in the center of town (around the corner from the BSP), and arranged with the gas station to arrange for a truck to take us back down to the beach with our full jugs.

In Rabaul, Rod at the Rabaul Yacht Club said he could get drums delivered to the yacht club, and they would supply a pump to pump it into our boat (rafted alongside the dock) or into our jugs. The price was a little cheaper by the drum. But again, we preferred to go to the pump ourselves and pump our own diesel. We arranged with someone with a van to take us and our empty jugs to the station, wait there for us to pump our diesel into our jugs, and then take us



back to the Rabaul Yacht Club. I think we paid K100 per round trip, which we split across 4 boats.

In Kimbe, the Liamo Reef Resort charged us 20K for a diesel run. There is a gas station just east of the resort out on the main road.

In Sep 2019, diesel was 3.43K/liter in Rabaul and 3.20K/liter in Kimbe.

In Manus, we went to Lombrum bay, just east of Lorengau, and there there is a truck that will come with fuel (it services the Navy base). You could also go into Lorengau to get diesel from the gas station, but the logistics of getting into Lorengau from Lombrum are difficult.

### **1.7.3 Propane (Cooking Gas)**

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** One of our buddy boats got a propane tank refilled in Rabaul—tanks using a “standard” US/Aus/NZ “internal reverse thread”. You drop it off at the fill place one day and pick it up the next day. Ask at Rabaul Yacht Club.

We bought a Solomons “Total” brand tank and matching regulator in Honiara, and we understand that these can be swapped/filled in both PNG and the Solomons.

### **1.7.4 Groceries**

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** There are decent grocery stores and a fresh market at Kavieng, Rabaul, Kokopo, Kimbe and Manus. If doing a major restocking while in Rabaul, it would be worth going into Kokopo, as there are several grocery stores who cater to ex-pats (especially Andersons).

Kavieng tended to run out of things, was more expensive, and had less variety than Rabaul and Kimbe. (No cheese and no eggs, at times in Rabaul). So if you see something in Kavieng that you want, should buy it then because it might not be there when you come back.

Both of the big grocery stores in Kavieng on the main street took credit cards.

Rabaul had a much better selection than Kavieng, and prices were much better. However, the people in Rabaul often went to Kokopo to stores there to get specific items (especially Australian specialty items). Ask at Rabaul Yacht Club for specifics.

Kimbe had a nice market and two fairly big grocery stores. We even found fresh broccoli there (but don't expect it, this was a once in a while thing).

Manus had a fairly small market and a poor grocery store, and was probably expensive on a par with Kavieng.

We arranged a day trip sightseeing tour in Rabaul, and it included a stop at the Andersen's grocery store and the main fresh market in Kokopo. But you can also do it via PMV (4K each way from the main Rabaul bus area to Andersen's in Kokopo).

We did not stop in any other major cities in PNG, so don't know their situation.

The veggie trading wasn't quite as good in PNG as it was in the Solomons. In the Solomons, you drop anchor and someone is out in a canoe almost immediately offering you fruits and veggies. PNG, the outer areas have less English and the people are shyer, we often had to ask if they had any fruits or veggies to trade.

Beer prices are pretty expensive in PNG. A case of SP beer in cans was K126.80 in Kimbe (probably more expensive in the outer islands), or about \$37-38 USD. We bought some rum in Rabaul—it was OK tasting but expensive.

### **1.7.5 Water**

**Soggy Paws – March & Sep 2019:** We have a watermaker and had adequate rain in Feb/Mar so we never stressed for fresh water. Nusa Resort in Kavieng said in the paper they gave us when we checked in with them that fresh water was available from the fishing pier.

Rabaul Yacht Club also has fresh water available.

We probably could have gotten fresh water in jugs from the two places we stopped at in Kimbe Bay in September. Once we went east of Rabaul in September, we got less and less rain, especially offshore (Manus, Hermits, Ninigos).

### **1.7.6 Boat Parts & Repairs**

Ed Note: It's always a good idea to make contact with the location you are shipping to, to make sure it is OK to ship stuff in, and to make sure you know the proper address and protocol, to avoid delays and avoidable duties, bribes, and taxes.

**Soggy Paws – August 2019:** Friends had a few bits of electronics shipped in from the USA via DHL. It was expensive, but it arrived in about a week in Rabaul (from California). The address used was:

Foreign Yacht in Transit <yacht name>  
c/o Rabaul Yacht Club  
Mango Avenue  
611, Rabaul  
Papua New Guinea

Rod Pearce at Rabaul Yacht Club received the package and held it for the yacht's arrival in Rabaul. Rod's email address (to confirm this is still the best way to ship stuff in to Rabaul) is [rodpearce7@gmail.com](mailto:rodpearce7@gmail.com).

**Soggy Paws – March 2019:** There are general hardware stores in Kavieng, but not much in the way of marine supplies. We did find one or two stores in Rabaul that had marine-oriented items (like International Bottom Paint and good quality 2-part epoxy). Pricey, though.

**Indigo II – Feb 2019 – Shipping to Kavieng via DHL:** We shipped some needed repair parts from Australia. We shipped three parcels addressed to:

<yacht name> YACHT IN TRANSIT  
NUSA ISLAND RETREAT  
PO BOX 305  
KAVIENG 631  
NEW IRELAND  
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Phone number +675 723183302 (Nusa Island Retreat)

All three parcels were sent from Australia by three different senders with tracking numbers. The senders tracked the progress of the parcels. All parcels arrived promptly in PNG (within 48 hours of despatch) but took a few days to reach Kavieng.

Although Nusa Island Retreat was happy for us to use their address for our parcels, they did not collect the parcels from the DHL office in Kavieng – that was left for us to do. The DHL office takes a bit of finding, located in a fenced compound off Djaul Street, where it extends north past J. Tong Supermarket (on the corner of Djaul and Mongol Streets). The cheerful DHL office attendant is Sheren – phone +675 7922 6735; office hours 7:30am to 4:40pm.

Two parcels arrived in Kavieng without incident:

- Spare parts of an engine water pump weighing less than 0.5kg and valued at Aus\$407.24;
- Bicycle part weighing 0.48kg and valued at Aus\$20.

The third parcel containing four 5-micron filters for our Spectra Watermaker was the largest parcel, weighing between 0.7 and 2kg and valued at Aus\$266.49. Although clearly labelled “SV Indigo II Yacht in Transit”, this parcel attracted customs fees of 67.20 kina (about Aus\$27) and was held by DHL in Port Moresby until we paid the fees to Sheren at the DHL office in Kavieng. Once the fees had been paid, the parcel was shipped to Lae and a couple of days later it arrived in Kavieng.

We have yet to write to DHL to ask why the third parcel attracted customs fees.

Overall experience: dependable, fast delivery service with good outcome.

### **L'il Explorers – June 2018: Mail & Shipping**

Our IridiumGo battery did a controlled explosion while we were exploring the Mortlock Islands.

The IridiumGo will not function unless it has a battery. Since the exploded battery was twice its normal size we had to hold it in Mickey Mouse style with a clamp as the cover would not work.

We had a new battery sent via FedEx to the Nusa Resort (see attached). Once FedEx reaches Port Moresby it becomes TNT. It made it to Kavieng exactly on the day it was promised, which was 10 days after it was sent.

The address we used was:

C/O SHAUN KEANE (*Ed note: the Nusa Island Resort Manager*)

<yacht name> "YACHT IN TRANSIT"

NUSA ISLAND RETREAT  
KAVIENG, NEW IRELAND  
KAVIENG 631

Phone +675 7231 8302

### **1.7.7 Medical**

**Soggy Paws – October 2019:** There are medical centers in most large towns and small clinics in the larger villages. In Kavieng, two of us went on separate occasions to the hospital—one person was impressed, the other wasn't.

### 1.7.8 Laundry

### 1.8 Embassies and Consulates

There is an Australian High Commission in Port Moresby.

There is a US Embassy in Port Moresby.

<https://pg.usembassy.gov/>

For visitors coming to PNG wanting visas in advance, there is a PNG High Commission in Honiara, Solomon Islands, plus in several locations in Australia (major cities, see Visas section). It is also possible now to obtain a PNG visa in advance online.

### 1.9 Getting Visitors In and Out

The primary airline in PNG is Air Niugini ([airniugini.com](http://airniugini.com)). Here are the international and local route maps as of August 2018:





## 1.10 Communications

### 1.10.1 VHF

**General VHF Advice that applies to all areas:** Be aware that on high power, a good VHF will transmit 25 miles line of sight. So if you are only doing within-anchorage communications, switch to low power. On the flip side, if you are trying to call across island, or to the next island, use high power, and turn your squelch down. Make sure you are aware which channels are automatic low power (ie 17, 67 on some radios), and stay away from the low-power channels for long distance conversations.

Though widely spaced in channel number, channels 16, 68, and 18 are very close to each other in frequency. Most VHF antennas are 'tuned' for channel 16, so long distance communications will work best on 16, 18 or 68. Conversely, in a crowded anchorage, transmission on high power on channel 18 or 68 may 'bleed' over to channel 16 (and almost any other channel, if you're close enough). You don't need high power to talk to the boat next to you, so turn your radio to Low Power!!

Also be aware that some channels that Americans use frequently are 'duplex' channels in International mode. So, for example, you may have trouble communicating with a European boat, or an American boat whose radio is in International mode, on Channel 18. (see any VHF guide for the full list of international and US channels and frequencies, but any US channel designated 'a', like 18a, 22a, etc will cause trouble with VHF's in international mode).

Make sure you ask in each port what the local channels are--both so you know how to reach someone ashore and so you know not to use those channels for your off-channel conversations.

### **1.10.2 SSB Radio Frequencies and Nets**

**Soggy Paws – 2017:** In PNG and Solomons, it may be possible to tune into the Gulf Harbor Radio net. Times and frequencies can be found here:

Here are some other radio comms information provided by Gulf Harbor Radio:

International Emergency Frequencies

2182 4125 6215 8291 12290 16420

NZ Maritime Radio monitors all emergency frequencies 24/7 see below for working frequencies

tel. 0800 MARITIME, 0800 627 48463 maritime@kordia.co.nz

tel . 0064 (0)4 9148333

RCC NZ tel 0064 (0) 4 577 8030 rcc@maritimenz@govt.nz

Cruiser Nets

Gulf Harbour Radio 8752 (alt 8779 or 8297)) at 1915 UTC, 0715 am NZST. Also 6230, 12353, 12365

Mon thru Sat Weather summary for South Pacific cruising area on the half hour.

May1-Nov30 GHR email: ghradio@xtra.co.nz

Far North Radio 6516 at 1800 NZST. Position reports. Starts with Islands weather.

Northland Radio various frequencies so go to: <https://northlandradio.nz/frequencies/>

Tony's Maritime Net 14315 USB daily at 2100UTC, ham net

Pacific Seafarers Net 14300 USB at 0300 UTC, ham net pacseanet@gmail.com

JRCC Honolulu Tel 001 808 535 3333 JRCCHonolulu@uscg.mil

NZ Maritime Radio SSB WEATHER

UTC UTC FREQ FREQ

0303\* 1503\* 6224 12356 \*warnings only

0333\* 1533\* 8297 16531

0903 2103 6224 12356

1003 2203 8297 16531

NavArea XIV includes: Islands- Equator to 25S, 160E to 120W

Subtropic- 23S to 40S, Australian Coast to 120W

Pacific- 25S to 55S, 170W to 120W

NZ Wx Fax Frequencies

5807.0 9459.0 13550.0 16340.1, Subtract 1.9 for SSB RX

(and 3247.4 between 0945 and 1645UTC at the 16340 time)

Someone told us that Hans aboard Sea Goon hangs out in the Louisiades and sometimes has a net going on 8170 at 0800 Local.

**Forza – 2010:** There is also a north Aust and Islands HF net, called the 'Shiela Net' at UTC +10 at 0800 every morning where you can hear the latest and check in. Sometimes we could receive and transmit but other times there was too much static.

### **1.10.3 Cell Phones and Internet**

Country code is +675

#### **1.10.3.1 Digicel**

<https://support-pg.digicelgroup.com>

APN Internet / Data Settings and how to use them.

The APN is the gateway which allows the mobile device to seamlessly access the internet as if you were using a computer. In the event that your data is not working when you have inserted your SIM card, please check the APN settings or Internet settings on your mobile device.

Here's how you can add the APN (Internet Settings) in most devices:

1. Go to Settings >More/More Networks > Mobile Networks > Access Point Names.
2. Select Add.
3. Type in 'internet.digicelpng.com' in the APN slot. No username or password is needed. After the information is entered, select More > Save .
4. Finally, select the newly added Internet Access Point and restart your device.

Different phones have different settings.

**Restricting Background Data Usage (Android):** The easiest way to stop data dribble is by turning off Mobile Data when you don't really need a connection.

You can set the Android system to restrict background data usage in Settings > Data usage > Restrict Background Data.

You can also restrict background data for individual apps in Settings > Apps (depending on which version of Android you have).

You can also change your sync settings for Google services in Settings > Accounts > Google > select the account and then un-check the services you don't want to sync automatically.

4G/LTE: All 4G mobile plans include LTE service within LTE coverage zones. This means once you have an LTE sim card & a compatible device, you are able to browse at super LTE fast speeds!

All plans roll over data from your previous plan when a new plan is activated prior to expiry of the current plan.

All plans auto-renew.

Prepaid out of bundle charges -overage of per MB will apply if the data bundle is fully used before the end of the plan duration (once you opt in).



If you are not on a data plan, you will be charged per MB of data used without a plan.

To check your data balance and manage your 4G data plan, dial \*675#.

**Checking Balance:** Your balance is the amount of credit available in your account to be used. If you have purchased a data plan, you can also find the amount of data (in MB or GB) available in your account.

Check your balance by using your preferred method:

Dial \*130# - (1tok bundles, Data bundles, Promotional bundles)

Dial \*120# - (money balance)

MyDigicel App (never worked for me).

**Purchasing Data Plans without the Digicel App:** To purchase data plans, simply dial \*777# and press send and find data plans which are affordable and suitable to your budget.

The following is a brief run through on how to buy data pass:

Firstly, dial \*777# (or \*675) and send to find the following menu. All the Data Bundles available on Digicel's network will be displayed.

A sense of the prices for data (from the Digicel PNG website Jan 2019):

1 Day / 1.2GB = K25 / \$7.50 USD

3 Day / 1.2GB = K35 / \$10.40 USD

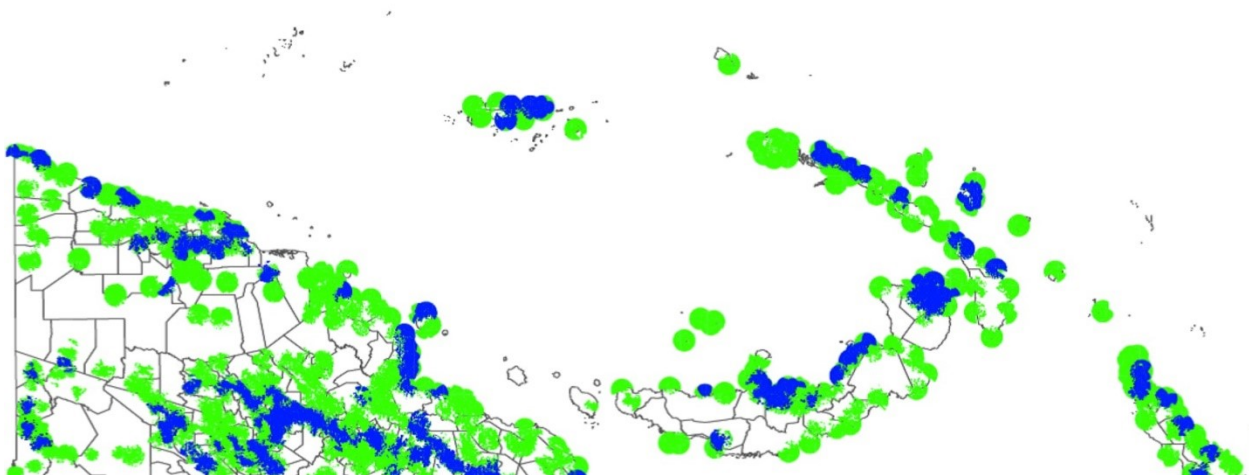
7 Day / 1GB = K30 / \$8.90 USD

30 Day / 5GB = K130 / \$38.70 USD

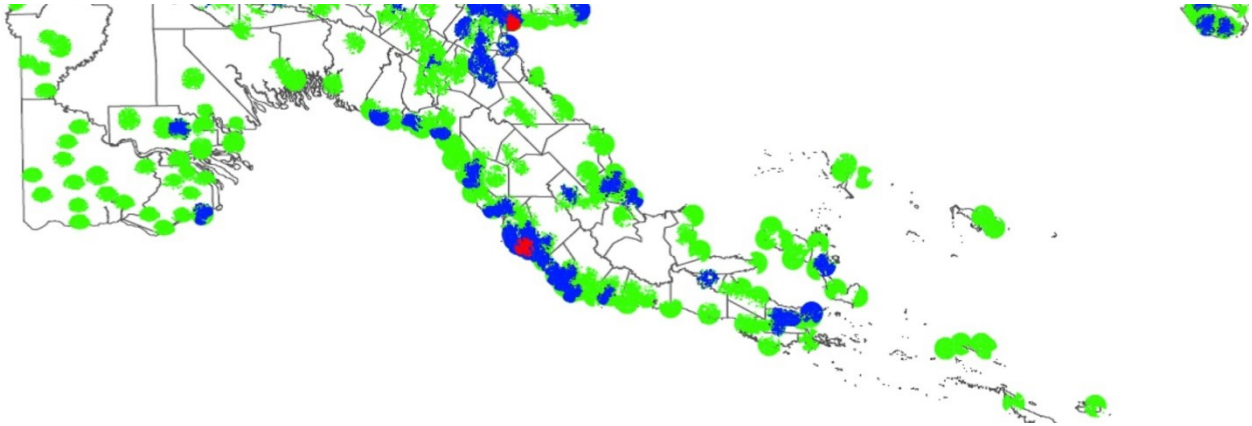
More plans and details here:

<https://www.digicelgroup.com/pg/en/mobile/plans-services/prepaid-plans.html>

## Coverage Map







Green Shades: 2G Coverage

Blue Shades: 3G Coverage

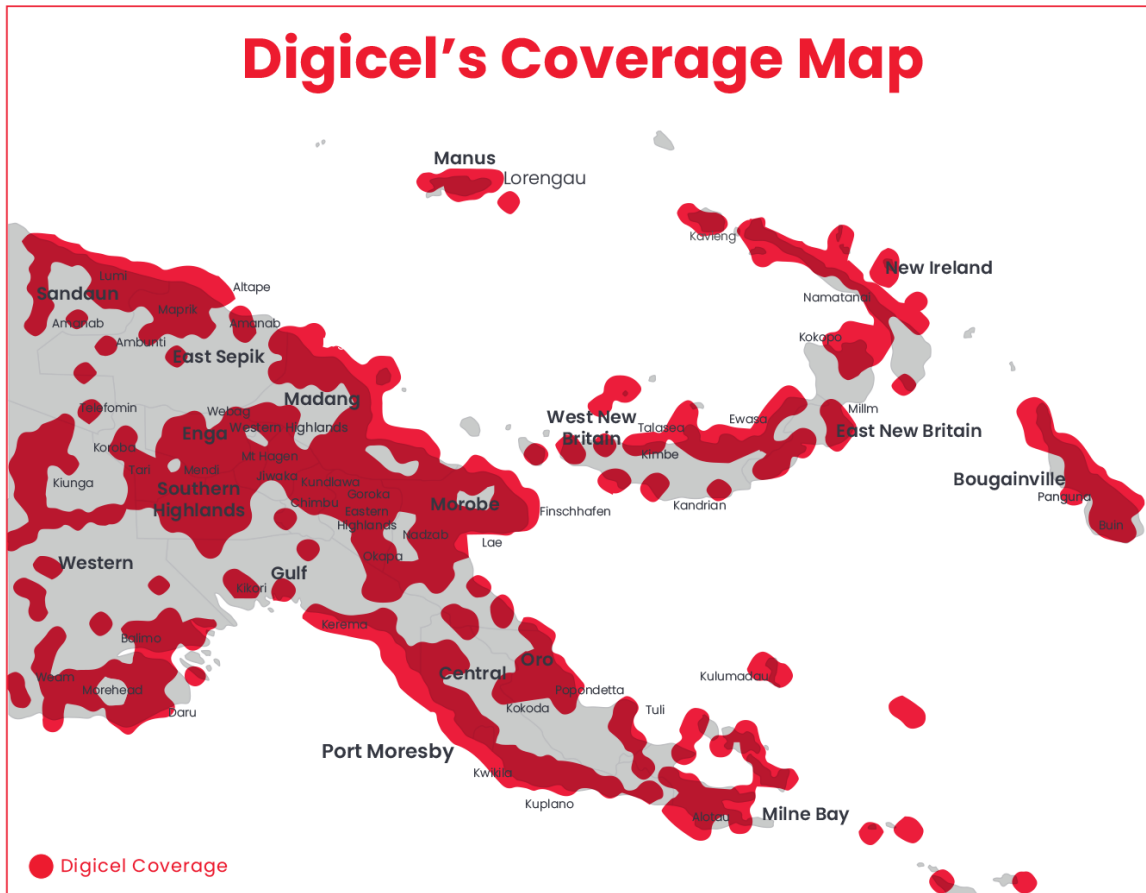
Red Shades: 4G LTE Coverage

**Soggy Paws – Feb 2019 – Coverage Notes:** The above map indicates 2G coverage in New Hanover, but we had our phone on the entire time sailing along the coast and had no cell phone bars at all. We did get a tiny whiff of cell phone (one bar) at Clems Place (Three Island Harbor area). You had to stand under a specific tree on the beach to receive anything. Move one way or another and there was nothing.

Approaching Kavieng, we finally got a connection and were able to download 40MB of emails in 15 minutes. But when in Kavieng, we struggled oftentimes to maintain a connection.

We did have some coverage on the west side of Buka and parts of West Bouganville.

Here is another map taken off the Digicel site September 2019:



**Soggy Paws – Feb 2019 – Connectivity Issues & Other Grumbles:** The APN that was automatically added to my cell phone by magic once we connected was named DigicelPNG LTE and the apn was “lte” (no quotes). My phone indicated 4G+ but eventually dropped down to H+. But I kept having problems connecting my laptop through my cell phone’s hotspot, even though the cell phone had a decent connection and I could get internet on it. I tried many things to resolve the issue. Finally I put the sim card in my old 3G hotspot and it worked well for an hour or so. But then... I got No Connectivity. Putting the sim card back in the phone resolved the issue.

We had several frustrations with PNG Digicel...first, if you buy a sim card from a 3<sup>rd</sup> party operator, you MUST eventually register the sim directly with Digicel—they filled out a lengthy form, made a copy of an ID (passport or driver’s license), and took a picture of us...then 2 weeks later we got an SMS from Digicel that we must register our sims or they’d be deactivated within 7 days!!

Two, it is very expensive (after getting used to \$20/mo for 800 MB per day in SE Asia). The plan I used was K35 for 1.2GB good for 3 days. I almost always used up the 1.2GB before my 3 days were up. If you run through your data package, the charge is either .3 or .5 Kina (about 10 US cents) per MB, and it was easy to overlook the SMS warning you that you were out of data.

Three, almost every SMS from Digicel told us to “download and use the Digicel App” but I could never get the app to work properly.

Four, it may be frequency related to individual phones, but changing from 4G to 3G to 2G never worked very smoothly.

Finally, when you subscribe to a data package, the SMS says to use \*777# to check up on your data balance and your money balance. But, half the time, \*777# doesn't properly report your data balance (\*130# was easier and always seemed accurate).

**Screensaver – August 2017** - Cell Data Internet: Some confusion on my part led to me reporting 2G(GSM) coverage pretty much all the way through PNG. This in fact was my experience and the coverage (2G) was pretty good, but it is misleading.

PNG has 3G and 4G. Sadly the world has not settled on standards as yet and just because 3G and 4G exist, even if your under the cell tower on a 4G phone this does not mean that your 3G or 4G phone will work, and indeed mine did not neither did a Philippines phone, both 3G and 4G capable.

An earlier iPhone did work on 3G and 4G. In layman terms if we think of 2G, 3G & 4G as different speeds of people talking on a radio in different languages, and we are not youth challenged so we can understand the different languages and keep up with the speed, no problem, we get 2G,3G & 4G. But now lets say the radio station changes its transmit frequency for 3G & 4G and you cant tune your radio to match. All of sudden you don't see or hear 3G or 4G even though its there.

In short there are many different frequencies used for 3G and 4G. PNG is at odds with much of the Pacific and uses 900Mhz only for 3G and 700Mhz only for 4G. Neither Philippines or Telstra phones (locked or unlocked) use either of these. A quad band non Telstra phone I expect should work.

Coverage was pretty good and performance of 2G was really very good outside of the big cities where it was typically over loaded.

The system is very simple to use and you simply buy voice, sms, and data according to you're needs or a package. But they are easily understood. I bought 1.2gb for 30 days at 68Kena (\$20.21 aud). This is expensive by the rest of Asia standards.

If you have an iPhone you maybe asked to create an account and login etc. If you do this then you are likely to be ripped off and find data is used up in a flash. The answer is don't create and account and manually enter APN (Access point name) “internet.digicelpng.com” if your using Digicel.

We bought Digicel Sim cards at around 25Kena and other than the phone not getting 3G or 4G it was sufficient for our needs.

#### **1.10.4 Mail**

Ed Note: It's always a good idea to make contact with the location you are shipping to, to make sure it is OK to ship stuff in, and to make sure you know the proper address and protocol, to avoid delays and avoidable duties, bribes, and taxes.

**Soggy Paws – August 2019:** Friends had a few bits of electronics shipped in from the USA via DHL. It was expensive, but it arrived in about a week in Rabaul (from California). The address used was:

Foreign Yacht in Transit <yacht name>  
c/o Rabaul Yacht Club  
Mango Avenue  
611, Rabaul  
Papua New Guinea

Rod Pearce at Rabaul Yacht Club received the package and held it for the yacht's arrival in Rabaul. Rod's email address (to confirm this is still the best way to ship stuff in to Rabaul) is [rodpearce7@gmail.com](mailto:rodpearce7@gmail.com).

**Soggy Paws – March 2019:** Friends had stuff shipped in from Australia to Kavieng (Nusa Island Resort, I think). 2 Packages arrived in Kavieng, one got held up in Customs in Port Moresby. They went to DHL to try to track the missing package, and found that Customs Duty was required to be paid. Once paid (via DHL, I think), the package arrived in Kavieng the next day.

**Li'l Explorers – June 2018 - Kavieng:** Our IridiumGo battery did a controlled explosion while we were exploring the Mortlock Islands.

The IridiumGo will not function unless it has a battery. Since the exploded battery was twice it's normal size we had to hold it in Mickey Mouse style with a clamp as the cover would not work.

We had a new battery sent via FedEx from San Diego to the Nusa Resort (see attached). Once FedEx reaches Port Moresby it becomes TNT. It made it to Kavieng exactly on the day it was promised, which was 10 days after it was sent.

The address we used was:

C/O SHAUN KEANE (Ed note: the Nusa Island Resort Manager)

<boat name> "YACHT IN TRANSIT"  
NUSA ISLAND RETREAT  
KAVIENG, NEW IRELAND  
KAVIENG 631

Phone 67572318302

Nusa Island Retreat's website is <http://nusaislandretreat.com> and their email address is [info@nusaislandretreat.com](mailto:info@nusaislandretreat.com). The phone number listed above is listed on the website as "Main Office".

### **1.10.5 News**

### **1.11 Diving**

### **1.12 Haulout, Storage, and Repair Facilities**

### **1.13 Tsunami Information**

**Soggy Paws - March 2014:** The entire Pacific Basin is subject to tsunamis. Since we have been in the Pacific (5 years), there have been 3 significant tsunamis which have affected cruising locations (American Samoa and Tonga in 2009, South America, Galapagos & Panama in 2010, Hawaii & Mexico in 2011).

The tsunamis originate in various locations, but the worst origination locations were Japan and Chile, however, many 'tremors' happen in these locations that do not cause widespread tsunamis.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center website is located here:

<http://ptwc.weather.gov/>

If you have onboard email, it is a good idea to subscribe to tsunami warning emails while you are in the Pacific, which you can do on this website. It might be useful to first subscribe from your internet email for a little while, to understand what messages might be coming your way, and how often, before you chance clogging up your onboard email.

### **1.14 Cruising Information Sources**

We are indebted to the people and organizations below for documenting their experiences and sharing them with us. We hope they don't mind that we've gathered their comments into this document to share with other cruisers who don't have internet

A few details about the boats are included, where we know them, so you can assess what 'a foot under the keel' means, for example.

Where it's important, we've annotated the contributions. But every section is a mix of several sources.

#### **1.14.1 Local Websites**

Here are some websites you should visit when you are looking for information on this area:

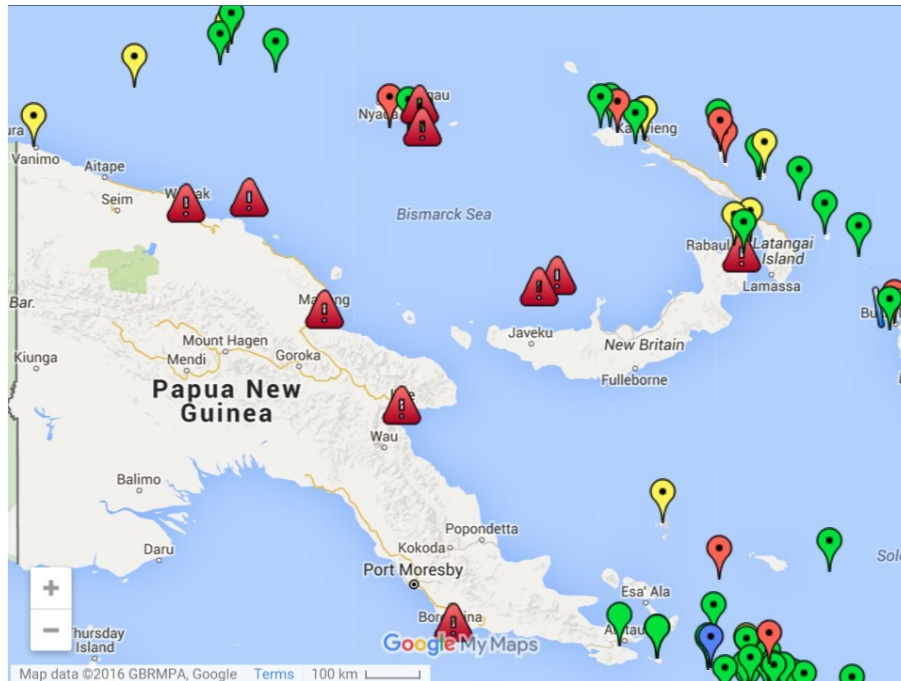
<http://louisidades.net/Navigation>

Royal Papua Yacht Club in Port Moresby

<http://www.rpyc.com.pg/>

Totem's post and linked map on reported good and bad areas in PNG:

<http://www.sailingtotem.com/2012/08/mapping-route-through-papua-new-guinea.html>



Totem's Research on Safe and Unsafe Places to Stop in PNG (2012)

### 1.14.2 Cruiser Reports

For most of the earlier sources, we have gleaned the information off the internet (cruiser's websites, blogs, and online forum postings) or out of an SSCA bulletin. We really appreciate all the contributions provided by our cruising friends.

**Rainbow Safari (2022):** Rainbow Safari was on a “delivery” trip from Singapore to Fiji, and stopped briefly in the Ninigos.

**Soggy Paws (2019):** Soggy Paws with Dave and Sherry onboard cruised from Indonesia in January-March, through Ninigos, Hermits, New Hanover, Kavieng, Duke of York, Rabaul, S New Ireland, Buka, Bouganville.

<http://svsoggypaws.blogspot.com>

We were accompanied by Indigo II and Berzerker who also made contributions to this Compendium.

We were also accompanied by Ocelot, and their website is at <http://svocelot.com>

**Screensaver – 2017 and 2018:** Screensaver a 48 ft Hunter monohull, drawing 6 ft, went through PNG southeast bound in 2017 and NW bound in 2018.

<https://screensaver49.wordpress.com/2017/>

<https://screensaver49.wordpress.com/2018/>

**L'il Explorers – 2018:** A catamaran with 2 adults and 5! Kids. Headed east to west through PNG in July/Aug 2018.

<https://www.facebook.com/Sailing-with-Lil-Explorers-Catamaran-and-Crew-281505708649584/>

**Aluna – 2018:** Matt and Nadine bought Aluna, a 38 ft Wharram catamaran, in Brisbane, Australia, and set out to explore Papua New Guinea.

**Field Trip (2017):** <http://svfieldtrip.blogspot.com/search/label/Papua%20New%20Guinea>

**Free Bird (2014-2015)** – “The co-ordinates given for the anchorages are not exact as I lifted them from memory and a quick look someone else’s OpenCPN, not from notes taken when I was there. Never the less they are pretty accurate. The information shared here was gathered from November 2014 to February 2015 so is a bit dated but will still be of some use I hope.”

“Happy travels in this beautiful and for the most part, very friendly country. Mentioning Sie and Gloria on the green boat Free Bird to the people I have listed by name might be of help.”

**Thyme – 2013:** Traveled east from Indonesia, clearing in at Vanimo in late 2012, then made their way to Madang via the Ninigos and Hermits. <http://svthyme.blogspot.com> and if you would like more information please contact us from here.

**Maranatha (2009-2012)** – From a PDF file found on the internet, called A Louisiades Cruising Guide 6-9-12. Phil Bailey S.V. Maranatha 18 July 2010. Last updated 06-Sep-2012.

[www.maranatha.id.au](http://www.maranatha.id.au) <https://yachtmaranatha.wordpress.com>

A LOUISIADES CRUISING GUIDE This will be updated as time permits. The names of the anchorages and islands are spelt as the locals do them. For instance, the correct name for Pana Numara is Pana Umarla and the correct name for Tugala Island is Sudest Island.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this guide all responsibility for the safe navigation of the vessel must remain with the master of the vessel. We take no responsibility.

Dates under photos indicate when the photo was taken. In some cases the scene may be different now.

Use this information in conjunction with the passage waypoints listed elsewhere on the website.

**Totem (2012)** – Totem is an American monohull, that transited from Australia, through the offshore islands of PNG to Jayapura Indonesia.

<http://www.sailingtotem.com>

**Endless Summer (2011)** – Endless Summer is an Australian-flagged catamaran that made its way from Australia through the offshore islands of PNG, and on to Palau.

<http://www.sailblogs.com/member/endlesssummer/>

**Anui (2011)** – Anui is an Australian-flagged catamaran that made it way from Jayapura to Australia via the offshore islands of PNG in Aug-Oct 2011.

<http://www.anui.com.au/>

**Westward II (2010-2011)** - Westward II cruised through the outer islands of PNG from Sep 2010 to Feb 2011.

### **1.14.3 Facebook Groups**

There is a Facebook Group called Cruising the Louisiades and Papua New Guinea.

Facebook **The Great Ninigo Islands Canoe Race** by John Stokes, cinematographer

### **1.14.4 Noonsite**

Originally started by Jimmy Cornell, this site is a great repository of information for all those out-of-the-way places. Made possible by YOUR contributions.

<http://www.noonsite.com/Countries/PapuaNewGuinea>

### **1.14.5 Seven Seas Cruising Association**

The SSCA is a world-wide organization for cruisers whose primary function is to exchange information about cruising destinations. They have a monthly publication that is mostly letters from cruisers about the areas they are cruising. They also have a good website and a well-attended bulletin board. Membership is reasonable, and the monthly publication is available electronically every month. Indexed back issues are also available electronically.

<http://www.ssca.org>

### **1.14.6 Ocean Cruising Club**

The OCC is a world-wide organization for cruisers whose primary function is to exchange information about cruising destinations. They have a website and bi-annual publication that is mostly letters from cruisers about the areas they are cruising. Membership is reasonable, and the publication is available electronically. Indexed back issues are also available electronically.

<http://oceancruisingclub.org>

## **1.15 Printed Sources**

### **1.15.1 Cruising Guides**

We are consciously NOT duplicating any printed, copyrighted information here. It takes a lot of effort AND money to publish a cruising guide, and we firmly believe that if it is still in print, you should BUY it, not steal it (in electronic form).

The only cruising guide we know of is [Cruising Papua New Guinea by Alan Lucas](#), written in 1980. The version I have is a PDF file. This version was issued by CruisingBooks.com in 2000.

A less comprehensive guide is [Cruising in the Louisiades Papua New Guinea by Phil & Kristina Challands, S/V Songline](#) (purchased or downloaded online as an epub)

On board Songline, Kristina and Phil cruise the Louisiades and Milne Bay in Papua New Guinea. It's vintage cruising with great people, wonderful anchorages and amazing dive sites.

[US Sailing Directions \(Enroute\) PUB. 164 New Guinea](#) is available as a PDF file from the U.S. Government. It covers from eastern Indonesia and the whole coast of New Guinea.



### **1.15.2 Recommended Reading**

For background, we recommend the following books:

**Living on the Edge of the Universe** by Richard Bloomhead (Avail as eBook on Amazon)

**We, the Navigators** by David Lewis. Includes Ninigo Island canoes.

If you are interested in World War II activities in PNG, here's an online link to General MacArthur's Campaign through PNG:

<http://www.history.army.mil/books/wwii/MacArthur%20Reports/MacArthur%20V1/ch06.htm>

Or you can purchase (\$9.99) and download the entire book on MacArthur's campaign in WWII as an e-book from Amazon [here](#). (Note, after I purchased it, I found it to be poorly transformed from paper into ebook, might be better to download the website version).

## 2 Passage Reports

### 2.1 Sailing Here from Elsewhere

#### 2.1.1 From Micronesia

**Miss Behave – Palau to Ninigo – July/Aug 2014:** After clearing customs and immigration and paying the exit fees (many) we got underway at 11:11Am. Malakal Harbour was the first hint that things were to be less than perfect with 20kts from the SW. Exiting the eastern channel was like jumping into a washing machine. 3m waves and 25 kts from the south. Currently we have a wisp of a Genoa up and a 2xreef in the main. Waves are 2-3 metres, wind is 180/15-20 steady. We are well and getting ready for a roughish night.

July 30: Well we woke to a calm day with 15 kts of wind on the beam. During the afternoon the wind has backed slightly and it is now 8 knots but we have averaged 5 kts most of the day. Clouds are building to the east meaning a chance of rain. A small low was forecast. I had a sleep at 2pm and just as I woke we had a double hook up of 2kg mackerel landing both. It was sashimi for a late lunch and we will BBQ grill the other this afternoon. We are still heading east as much as we can before the winds turn SE.

6 39.0'N:137 09.2'E 120|5kts|10|180, 170 nm ESE of Palau - Weather is good.

Aug 1: 05 29.0'N:139 40.0'E 130|5kts|5|130, 640 miles from Manus Island

It was an eventful afternoon. Out of the blue we saw a small house floating on it's lonesome. Sitting in the middle of nowhere was a hut on a bamboo platform. Noone there, no radar reflectors, nothing. It contained a small bed and was likely a fishing platform. Not the thing you want to hit in the middle of the night. As we pulled away from it a lovely yellow fin tuna took our lure and ended up as dinner. The winds that had been coaxing us east stopped abruptly leaving us no option than to start the engine. After 15 minutes the engine overheat alarm sounded. A pipe from the heat exchanger had popped off. I changed the raw water impeller and all is good.

Aug 2: 02 49.5'N:152 16.9'E 150|5|10|120, 300 miles

We had a great night sailing last night and tonight seems to be more of the same. Today we hooked a nice small tuna which we ate for dinner.

Kevin's advice to a friend via email: I think that the conduct of your passage here will be totally reliant on getting several days of favourable winds which seem unlikely so make sure you load up on diesel and have a reliable engine.

We sailed initially for Ninigo then Hermit then Manus then ended up back in Ninigo.

**Elizabeth Jane II – August 2014:** Ed note: This is actually Palau to Solomons with a stop at Kapingamaranga, but the route is similar to that of going to PNG, so I thought it worth including.

Contrary to the weather forecasts that we were reading before leaving Palau, we were rocketing south and east and within 2 days we were being treated like royalty by the sea and enjoying the 2 kt east setting current at 40° longitude. Combine this counter current (so named because it runs opposite to the predominant current which sets slowly with the west bound trade winds) with 15-20kts of westerly winds and we were making an amazing 160nm a day which helped lift our spirits on this 2000nm journey to the Solomon Islands. The trip was not without its perils

though; we were sailing through a low-pressure system that was forming into a tropical low further north. This meant that we were experiencing lots of squalls, some that we could see forming hours in advance and others that had the rigging singing before we knew what was upon us. Most packed some hefty winds of up to 35kts, with rain and then they whipped up the seas often creating some mighty uncomfortable swell conditions. We used the wind vane steering feature on our auto pilot which made for some seriously lazy sailing, as our rudder would turn the boat when the wind shifted (which was extremely often and up to 1800 in the squally conditions) so we didn't have to continually gybe, which was handy when only one of us was on watch.

At 2am on day 5 the heavens opened and sent a torrent of rain that would have had Noah running for his raincoat and gumboots. The rain turned our deck into a swimming pool, ably caught to fill our water tanks. The 6 hour long deluge ended and took with it our spirits and the wind. But as the grey day emerged we saw that we had chipped away at our total passage distance by almost one third.

Day 6 marked the end of our fresh beef stores, we had been spoiling ourselves with beef stews, curries and stroganoff, the memory of Palau lingering.

Through the driving rain I could see a pod of dolphins having a right party in our bow wave and the swell. I imagine they did not want to pop their noses out of the ocean for too long, otherwise they might get a cold from the rain. The sea temperature was 29C, while the rain and wind made for a nippy time out of our nice protected cockpit.

Conditions? Well we had some reasonable swell, up to 3m and buffeting us from every angle. It made for an uncomfortable trip and had me slinking into corners with a green tinge taking notable shape on my face. Hugh's long hours of studying the historical weather patterns and daily viewing of the counter current location on the US NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) website had really paid its dues. Averaging 6 kts of boat speed plus 2-3kts of favourable current meant that we were getting through the long isolated ocean part of the journey at pace. The wind was always blowing, at between 10-20kts, but the direction varied almost by the minute. Relying on our wind vane steering made life a bit easier.

Day 8 saw the end of the low pressure system and therefore the strong winds. The wind was being extremely temperamental and only routing near squally storms could we gain some wind to propel us forward. The wind was so light and variable that the sails would flap and the boom would bang, while the chop from the swell would roll the boat from side to side. The easing up of the wind did not correlate to a more comfortable ride. So using the motor we would make some distance and sail when the wind decided to join us. We were also slowly making a bit of southerly heading and were approaching the unattractive equator and its notoriously hot and wind-free conditions.

A few fish caught made for some lovely fresh dinners.

On day 10 we bid the counter current adieu as it began to sweep northeast, weakening before disappearing below the surface entirely. Unfortunately our daily miles had dropped significantly to around the 100nm mark. The wind was still being fluky, but we were strategically planning our proposed arrival at Kapingamarangi Atoll, 250nm from the nearest atoll and 400nm from its mother-state island of Pohnpei (part of the Federate States of Micronesia), to ensure that we arrived at the best time of the day to make the tricky reef entry without incident. The atoll is a

roughly squashed circular shape, an encircled lagoon ringed by reef with spotted sand bars located 1.5m above the high tide mark. We had some pretty poor information about the place and our maps left a lot to be desired.

The full moon and a spring tide would make for ideal entry conditions to the lagoon and on Day 12 we were 25nm away at 7am. It was a steady sail north to the atoll and we were getting very excited and apprehensive about our intended stopping point.

1200nm, 12 days at sea and this was our first sighting of land. Paradise found!

**Kapinga to Solomons:** Still glowing from the magical break we had had at Kapingamarangi Atoll we launched into our next challenge, the final 700nm to the Solomon Islands western province. We sailed east initially, aiming to get more easting before we got stuck in the south-east trade winds that blow up the northern coast of Solomon and Bougainville Islands.

We were located at around 1 degree north of the equator and as such there was not much wind and it was hot. My was it hot. It was also still enough for us to jump in and have a cool off swim into water that was so clear and such an intense blue it did not give away the depth of the water that our charts stated were 4000m. But nothing could shelter us from the squalls, as the sun slowly dipped below the horizon we sailed into darkness as thunderstorms raged off each quarter of the boat. The storms would bring intense short rain downpours proceeded by 20kt wind blasts and 100 degree wind shifts. At dawn light would glimmer on the eastern horizon and become a searing globe by 8am and leave dim markers on the western horizon by 7pm. Dramatic cloud formations would tower into the stratosphere, leaving a sense of foreboding about the night ahead full of squally rains and strong wind bursts.

We were trawling a line but not until we angled south and passed through the choppy Bougainville Strait did we pick up a mackerel for dinner.

The shifting winds moving every 20 minutes or so made for extremely tiresome sailing. We rigged all the sheets and launched the spinnaker only for the wind to puff out and a squall to gather off port, shifting the wind. We dropped the spinnaker. The wind would blast at 25 kts for 10 minutes then puff out and we would be left suffering the swell generated by the storm gone passed. Finally we crossed the equator (passing a customary drink of rum to King Neptune on our way through) which boosted our hopes for favourable wind to take the final push south.

The last two days of passage wore us out with strong winds, big choppy seas and storms that would not let up. We hove to for 6 hours to try and let it pass. Pass it did as the 35kt winds slowly moved off to the west. This trip had really worked our patience and we were tired and snapping at each other. Probably a result of doing two long passages back-to-back with only a 3 day respite in the middle. As if King Neptune knew, to brighten our spirits we were gifted with a dolphin escort into the Solomon waters. Such a beautiful and welcome sight.

As we made our way to the north of Vella Lavella Island, we negotiated the tricky reef entry into Geva Harbour, slowly creeping our way over a shallow coral bar. But as we dropped anchor on the edge of the mangrove ringed cove, all we could hear was silence, interjected with a myriad of bird calls and the rustle of palm trees. Night was not far behind and lightning illuminated the sky as it flashed over the mountains in the distance.

Another Pacific Ocean stint, 700nm completed in 7 days. We were exhausted and very pleased to be in such a tranquil river to sleep off our long eastward passage - 19 sea-days and 2000nm from Palau. Welcome to the Solomon Islands!

Harlequin – April 2012 - Palau to Ninigos: Leaving the Eastern Passage, the engine went off and we enjoyed 12 hrs of 7-7.5 kts, and with an E'ly current to assist. We had obviously found the Equatorial Countercurrent - finally! The first Tuna was landed at sunset; all was starting well!

Then followed 12 hrs of motoring, refreshing rain showers with squally winds, and then we had glassy calms. And so it continued, with daily Tuna (and other monsters, impossible to land), occasional showers (always a shampoo moment), and amazing ocean sunsets & dawns. The E'ly current eventually disappeared and increasing calms renewed our efforts for efficient fuel usage, usually motor-sailing at 1700 RPM.

On Day 6, we crossed the equator and partook of the usual equator-crossing silliness with new crew.

The next morning at dawn, the heavens opened and the seas boiled around us for hours, the air filled with birds, Tuna & Dolphins leaping in a feeding frenzy. We duly thanked Neptune for his bounty, and plucked a few Tuna aboard at our whim. "Stop now!", someone called. "We have enough!". We could have filled the boat to the gunwales, had we wanted.

"Land ho!" was heard at dawn of the 7th day - we had arrived at the remote atolls of NW Papua New Guinea, the Ninigo Islands, famous as home of some the last Pacific sailing navigators & builders of sailing outrigger canoes.

### **Amante – Chuuk to New Ireland (2000?)**

When people think of Doldrums they think of light winds. This afforded us a chance to try out our cruising chute, which had moldered for 2 years after we bought it off a boat in Tonga. It was very helpful in reducing our fuel consumption, which is good because diesel cost about USD \$4/gal in Micronesia. It worked well: we could go 7.5 knots in a 10 knot quartering wind, 4.5 with 6 knots.

For those who think the Doldrums are all light winds, be advised that squalls are common. Once we crossed to the south side of the ITCZ (Intertropical Convergence Zone) we started to get nasty stuff and adverse winds, so down went the chute and up went the "Iron Main", i.e. we started motoring for the last 2 days.

After about 5 days we arrived at Kavieng, at the west end of New Ireland, Papua New Guinea.

**Carina – July 2016 – From Palau to Ninigo:** We arrived at Mal Island in the Ninigo Islands, Papua New Guinea, anchor down and set, at 2321 UTC (0921 local time) on Tuesday, August 9, 2016. During our challenging passage from the Republic of Palau we averaged 3.1 knots, about the speed of a brisk walk. Our fastest speed was almost 8.5 knots and our slowest, 0 knots (we don't motor when the wind drops). Our average speed for this passage was well below what we would normally expect, but considering we had days of almost calm conditions and Carina was carrying such a heavy payload, we were pleased we got here mostly under sail, using fewer than eight gallons of diesel.

Of the 12 days and 883 miles at sea, we had about 7 days of light winds where we were sometimes only able to coax Carina to speeds of 1.5 kts or so in the right direction. Our most

frustrating 24 hour run found us only 30 nm further along on the trip. Other days we spent in near gale conditions with driving rain that reduced visibility to a point just beyond our bow. We barely squeaked by one approaching squall with roiling black clouds that could have made footage for a movie about Armageddon.

We had a few failures en route, as we always expect, and only a couple of those were of concern. Our mast collar developed a leak - an annoyance, our man-overboard pole flag retainer slipped down the backstay - only a problem for the service life of the flag, our apparent wind indicator appears bent - perhaps by a boobie trying to land on it, though we haven't yet been up the mast to check on it so we really don't know what's up. Three of the four bolts on the fairlead for our starboard main boom preventer failed, and we broke a Monitor windvane steering control line on day two. The last item was the only one that created a stressful repair underway. We solved the preventer fairlead failure by re-rigging both sides with new blocks to the genoa track. This is actually a better configuration than the one we were using.

In an area of thousands of square miles of Pacific ocean, you would think that potential collisions would be astronomically rare. But on this journey, we had three huge cargo ships - of the dozen or so we saw - whose reciprocal track was EXACTLY 180 degrees from ours! This meant that, unless one or both vessels altered course, a collision was likely. This is a bit nerve wracking at 0200 on a "dark and stormy night".

It was here where our AIS instrument really shined. Most large vessels we encounter have AIS these days (it's required now by International Safety at Sea regulations), they put out an electronic signal that shows the vessel name, flag, port of call, destination and - much more importantly - the speed and course which is translated by our instrument into a closest point of approach (in nautical miles) and a time to the closest point of approach (CPA, TCPA) relative to Carina. Carina's AIS puts out a similar messages, though we are a class B unit appropriate for our size, so we don't have as much power or as many details.

Because of this information, whenever it is necessary, we are able to call the other vessel by name on the VHF radio on the international standby frequency, channel 16, apprise them of our presence if they haven't already seen us, and discuss a possible course change. The captains or watch officers we talked with on this trip may all have had heavy accents but all spoke English and all were polite and professional and altered course by a few degrees to pass us at a distance of 1 to 2 nm. Once we realized that our chosen passage almost exactly followed a busy shipping area to Asia, our watch-officer - one or the other of us is on watch during the entire 24 hours - became even more diligent about scanning the horizon frequently.

Our passage from Palau was during a waning moon and we had many nights of inky skies where even the stars were hidden by clouds. It's a bit disconcerting to be rolling along at 5 to 6 knots without being able to see anything ahead of you except for what might show up on radar with the rain gain nearly maxed out (rain return being subtracted in an attempt to see a ship hidden in a squall.) We did see, in the daytime, two FADs (fish accumulating devices) along the way. These are large, metal floating cylinders about three meters long that are tethered to the sea floor sometimes, 4,000 meters (13,000 feet) below. FADs are unlit and won't generally return a signal on radar unless you are just about to hit them. Some fishing vessels with attach themselves to a FAD and have small boats fishing or tending to smaller floats. FADs were a constant worry for us.

Just eighty-some-odd miles from our destination, we paused long enough to toast King Neptune with a healthy tot of rum as we crossed the equator under sail for the 11th time.

Our arrival at Ninigo corresponded with dawn and as we motored against a light southerly wind down the western side of the atoll, its motus began to become visible in the rising sun.

Checking and re-checking our position on a satellite photo we pointed Carina's bow towards the pass, ran its rapids and were soon inside the protected lagoon and at anchor. It seemed almost impossible to believe we were finally here at Ninigo after months of planning and our longer-than-expected passage. We were soon enveloped by the island community and it has been a great stay so far...we have much still to do and many stories to tell. Until then...

### **2.1.2 To and From Indonesia**

**Soggy Paws – October 2019 – From Ninigos to Biak:** It's about 490 nm from Ninigos to Biak. In October we started out with SW winds but not far into the passage, the wind switched to NW and stayed a northerly direction for a day, and then switched back to S. Very much "light and variable" sailing conditions. It took us 94 hours and only 10 of that was "pure sailing". During the day we would try hard to keep sailing, but at night we tended to make it easy on the crew and just turn the engine on if the winds got too light.

**Soggy Paws – January 2019 – From Sorong to Ninigos:** We left the SE tip of Waisai on Jan 13 and by Jan 28, we were anchored in the Ningos. Our trip was as follows:

Jan 13, Daysail to Pulau Amsterdam (52nm, 1 hr sailing)

Jan 14, Daysail P Amsterdam to ?? N Coast NG (52nm, 4 hrs sailing)

Jan 15, Daysail to ?? N Coast PNG (

Jan 16-17, Overnight to Biak

Jan 17-21, Biak, Check in, Check Out, Diesel, Laundry, Groceries, 1 day Diving

Jan 22, Daysail to Mios Weundi

Jan 23, Mios Weundi

Jan 24, Daysail to Manggawandi

Jan 25-28 In Ninigos!!!

From Sorong to Biak, the winds became mostly NW, and light for the most part, all the way to Biak. Between Manggawandi to Ninigos, and while we were in the Ninigos, the forecast consistently underpredicted the amount of wind (5-10 kts NW forecast ended up being 15-20 WNW).

We had following current, this time of year, pretty much the whole way. Averaged at least .75 knot behind us, sometimes up to 2kt.

You definitely want to make this run when the season is right for the direction you are going. People who try to go east in the June-July-August months or west in the December-Jan-Feb months are usually very unhappy with their passages. The shoulder months are doable as long as you have a good engine and plenty of diesel. You also need to always be aware of passing lows/typhoons going by in Micronesia and the Philippines (watch this weather:

<http://www.prh.noaa.gov/data/GUM/AFDPQ>

<http://www.metoc.navy.mil/jtwc/products/abpwweb.txt>

Though we chose to day hop as much as possible, it would be easily possible to make the trip from the Philippines this time of year direct to the Ninigos (or further on to Kavieng). Just follow the wind, a little south, then SE.

**Wandering Waterhorse – December 2018:** *They went direct from Kavieng to Biak, not stopping at Ninigos or Hermits.*

Miles to cover: 898 NM (Kavieng to Biak)

Estimated passage time: 6 to 7 days.

See the first part in the [Kavieng to Ninigos section](#).

DAY 4: Day 4 we passed the Ninigos. Wish now we had stopped. My morning shift had the winds building and sea very choppy. It was manageable and comfortable still.

We were able to sail which was good. Then it got worse. Super mega squall happened when 4 large squalls merged. We had a water spout from sea to sky and thought we needed to get the heck out of there.

We then spent almost 12 hours, gaining bugger all ground, going up and down and back and forward to try and get away from the ever-changing winds and systems. It was rough and it sucked big time.

Contact was kept with Lukim Yu who were a few hours behind us now, as we tried to give them some advance warning of what was coming. They too, got slammed by it all.

It was almost 10pm before the seas became organized again--still big rollers but no more white caps.

I cooked stir fry for dinner which was hilarious in the circumstances. We were headed for a tiny island that we had basic sat imagery of, while trying to get north – also only comfortable way with waves at that point, tried to anchor but too rough.

Wish like mad we had stopped at the Ninigo islands that we had passed at first light. Pretty happy for today to be almost over. Both uber tired.

There are huge ships out here. 300 m ones, crossing our paths regularly during the night. I am glad for AIS which tells us their information, speed over ground and direction etc. so we can make sure that we will not crash into them, it gives you time to work out courses and change sailing angles accordingly.

DAY 5: Ships in the night passed by this morning, many and close again.

Night was super slow. 1 engine. No sail. Saving diesel. Got annoyed at going 4 knots after the sun came up so put the other engine on to get up to 6.

Ticking along motor sailing this afternoon. Dodging weather systems that appear out of nowhere...So tired still and daunted at the prospect of another couple nights out here.



Dinner from the freezer again, so glad all the meals were done before we left as it makes it so much easier just pulling something out of the freezer. The kids are endless eating machines, constantly wanting to be fed.

We bounced out way over into Indonesian waters at 2305, with breeze filling the air, the right direction for a change, and clouds shadowing the half moon that hung in the sky, weakly illuminating the darker squall clouds I was desperately hoping would pass behind us.

DAY 6 & 7: When will it end. We drive/sail back and forth in currents, wind and waves, hoping for a path and never finding one.

The ocean is horrifically rough and we have a washing machine like effect going on from wave directions coming from everywhere.

We chose to go the inside of some islands up the coast to try and get some relief from the weather as was meant to be slightly better there, well now we are stuck with very strong currents slowing us down along with all the other crap in this situation.

It has been another day of back and forward up and down and going nowhere really, Catamarans are not designed for this weather and sea state, in fact no boat would be enjoying this.

We continue on, hoping to make a little ground and get ourselves past this mess.

We did manage to catch 4 fish, one after the other when we managed to get an angle to sail, hitting 8 knots was obviously what the Walu decided was a good bite speed, as each time the boat would climb over 7 to 7.5 we would get a strike.

We stopped the boat to a knot for dinner in some resemblance of calm, managed to have her spin while we were just about to get started again and one of the lines got caught around the prop cone. With a rope tied to him, Chae had to get in the water and try and sort it out. Line was cut, lovely lure lost and we just had to get on our way into the mess that was the weather again.

It was just getting worse again. Winds building significantly again and waves to match. On the back of stuff all sleep, this was beyond me.

We covered 32 NM in the right direction over an entire 24 hour day. To put this in perspective we can easily do 160+ miles per day in good sailing conditions, or motoring if we can use both engines. This was demoralising to say the least when we worked it out.

DAY 8: Winds continue all night and into the morning. I couldn't cope.

During my night watch, the wind got to 40 knots. Apparently there is a special kind of noise the wind makes while ripping through the rigging and boat. I am so glad that it was a noise I didn't get to hear. We were smashing up and down into giant waves.

We found huge currents while trying to get across the top of West Papua made us make little way again, and it was into horrific chop and big waves.

We finally managed to get off the river mouth dirty mixed up water area into sea again and started actually sailing.

The waves were getting too big again and with the wind strengthening we headed back to where we came from, dad providing intel via Iridium on the river mouths where we could potentially go and hide.

We chose one, the Maremembo River. Apparently it is like the Amazon of West Papua and teems with amazing creatures. Huge almost standing waves tore us in. I sat in the cockpit and watched as they rode above the solar panels, threatening to swamp the back of the boat, but she rode them like a boss with our captain safely bringing us in through the chaos.

Chae said it was the most fearful he has been on the boat to date.

Once in the river we pulled to a jetty, a giant random jetty, and were surrounded by locals who spoke no English.

We tried to ask if they had solar (diesel) as by this stage we were running very, very low on it. 'Yes' was a confused translation, Chae went to go and see. He came back, said we need to leave, there was not a good vibe in this place.

While he was gone I had a guy jump on the boat and just start to walk around looking around outside. A bit scary and weird.

We then tried to anchor at the river mouth away from the village. A 5-knot current at the mouth meant we had a nightmare of a time and we realised we needed to leave properly, not just to the mouth of the river.

Back out through those waves was a prospect I didn't not think kindly of. Luckily, the waves had dropped a bit and Chae took us out, again calm and measured (on the outside at least) while I was all but having to go and change my underwear. Out was easier than in.

We turned and headed for the other river mouth around the corner. By this time our buddy boat had already gone in, they were anchored in the still water.

We had another surfing experience to contend with before we got there. The charts, which have so far been pretty reliable, must have been off centered and we again surged in on these rollers, that when you looked back were breaking after we went over them. It was manic. We were literally surfing in our boat, on giant rolling waves that would break behind us.

We slowly made our way over to the calmer water while driving on land apparently according to the charts, we picked our way into the bay.

We had locals waving and cheering at us as we went past, they probably never see yachts in here and then all of a sudden there are 2.

Seeing Lukim Yu and being able to anchor and be still for the first time in 8 days was a feeling I just cannot describe. Although it's only a night to get out of the wild that is happening outside this calm spot, it's going to be good to have a sleep and regroup.

**Day 9:** We woke in the calm bay, wondering what was going to be thrown at us next when we leave today. Yesterday was the most eventful day we have ever had. And when I say eventful it is a loose and positive sounding word for the actual experience we went through. I cannot describe accurately the horror that we had to endure.

The pressure is now on to get it Biak before they close for Christmas on Friday, 3 days. Oh dear. Diesel situation is heavy on the mind, if it is anything like yesterday we may be in trouble with the lack of fuel. Who knew over 600L would not be enough.

Stopping for sleep and re grouping was the right decision, but now we just need to get on track again. I tell you, it's not going to be easy to up anchor and head back out that river mouth.

Once we got out of the river and into clear water, we had a constant 27 knots for several hours with waves that one would expect with that wind speed. Winds finally dropped later in the day.

We sailed all day tacking back and forth and making sweet f all miles in the right direction, and on into the stunning moonlight night to sail backwards and forwards in.

Day 10: Only 97 miles to go (in a straight line) by the time we tacked again at midnight.

Sailing sailing, will it ever end. We make progress on each tack and inch our way slowly to the destination.

At some point during my sleep the wind dropped enough for us to turn in the right direction and motor sail on a very high wind angle to gain some ground. This makes all the difference. We actually make headway.

We have a decision to make on if we go over or under the Schouten Islands. We had always planned under but with the wind shifts, both boats decide the top way is more favorable.

Continue on the same tack and the weather locks into high gear again with big gusts and the seas build again.

Lukim Yu has one jerry can of diesel left and since we are on below zero, and we're not quite sure how low our fuel gauges go, as they seem to work a long way under zero, they give it to us so we can all make it together. (Transfer made by dinghy).

Turning back into the wind we fly off again, siphoning diesel into our tank as we go, and avoiding waves as they break over the front of the boat. Never have we had so much water over her as on this passage. One particularly keen one makes it all the way over the cabin roof and into the hatches that open to the cockpit...right where I am standing! Thanks ocean!

Overnight, the winds die down in the channel between the islands but we don't care, we have enough diesel now to make it motor sailing.

We pull into Biak Harbour at 4 am and anchor in the darkness, so very, very glad to have made it after all the trials along the way. The anchorage is super roly, but we don't care. We flop into beds, our tired and aching bodies molding into the mattresses, enveloping ourselves on the marshmallow like comfort that is a boat off the open seas.

Customs still needs to be cleared, along with Health and Quarantine, Immigration and a visit to the Harbour Master. We will do this as soon as we can, being so close to Christmas this will be their last working day to get formalities cleared. Man did we push it to the time limit!

The relief is intense that it is all done. That we now have shorter journeys for the foreseeable future, where the weather forecasts are usually more reliable and we will have many more islands to bolt to should the need arise.

Funnily enough the predictions for the next 6 or 7 days is NO wind and glass calm doldrums conditions again...what are the chances.

**Field Trip – November 2017 – Ninigo to Indonesia (Sorong):** During our sailing through PNG in the months of July through October, we have lost any faith in weather forecasts. Each time we prep for a longer passage, Mark sits at the nav desk diligently pouring over various forecasts that often contradict one another. Inevitably, two of the four models would be similar, while the other two were exactly opposite. Which one to believe? Does majority rule? In our experience, it is Russian Roulette.

The passage from Cenderawasih Bay around the corner to Sorong was predicted to be uncomfortable - winds on the nose and nasty CAPE activity that would surely result in many storms along the way. One forecast of the four, however, showed very light winds and calm seas. Mark's mom was scheduled to arrive into Sorong in only a few days' time, meaning we didn't have much cushion in our sailing itinerary. We'd have to take what we were dealt for the 200-mile trek from Manokwari to Sorong. I popped a Stugeron tablet, doubled the Chana Masala I was making for dinner to use as leftovers, and mentally prepared myself for a rip snorter.

Turns out, the winds never came. The first 24 hours was supposed to be rolly and raucous, but instead it was placid and tranquil. Nada. Elizabeth kept looking out at the flat horizon sarcastically quipping, "Man, it sure is rough out here! This is one of the worst sails ever!!" Yep, this time, we were all relieved that the majority of the prediction models were completely wrong. However, I couldn't shake off the tense anticipation, expecting the winds to pick up and the seas to churn beneath me at any moment. Turns out, the motors ran all but three hours of the trip, propelling us through glassy seas.

At night, we slowed down considerably from our 5.5 knot daytime speed. This stretch of ocean is notorious for drifting logs - long, robust tree trunks, some with gnarly roots still intact, that have been washed away or have tumbled off a lumber barge. In the outer islands, these same trees that cause such angst among cruisers become a celebrated blessing for the villagers onto whose shores they finally land. Every beach that we walked along had its own tree trunk breakwater. In the Ninigo Islands, folks happily await low tide when they can chop them up into planks for constructing homes or outrigger canoes.

Seeing the logs on a beach was one thing, but we did not want any close encounters of the lumber-kind while underway. During the daytime we were on the lookout always, and at night, when we couldn't spot the logs, we figured we'd rather bump into one at 2 knots than at 5.5. In the end, logs were avoided during the day, and miraculously missed at night.

Timber wasn't the only thing for which we were keeping careful watch. Occasionally, our radar would pick up tiny, motionless blobs. As we approached, a quick look in the binoculars would reveal a haphazardly rigged bouy, some marked with flags, others with a vertically lashed palm frond, somehow moored to the seabottom in a thousand feet of water. These Fish Attraction Devices (FADs) dotted the horizon and challenged even the most skilled radar-reading captain. All these possible obstructions required constant monitoring. Even a bathroom break warranted a substitute (usually junior) crew at the helm.

For most of our trip, our sole scenery (aside from FADs and runaway timber) had been the gloriously undeveloped, lush, towering mountains of Papua that fell right into the sea, always

obscured by a smoky haze of moist, tropical air. I marveled at the absolute lack of hut-lined shores and the very few pillars of smoke that swirled from the dense canopy. I imagined tribal people living completely camouflaged within these jungle surroundings, having lived for centuries in perfect harmony with this immense forest. How many villages were actually hidden against the mountainside, invisible to outsiders? Visions of loin-clothed men wielding spears, stiff bamboo piercing their nostrils and vibrant bird feathers adorning their heads, suddenly seemed the only possibility. The misty mystery of these densely forested mountains captivated me as we sailed along - their purplish hues reminiscent of the Great Smoky Mountains of east Tennessee, not far from our families' homes.

Finally, on day three, we started to see signs of civilization. Others had told us about the culture shock that bombarded them the first time they stepped foot in an Indonesian port after walking along the sandy paths of the remote, sparsely populated PNG islands. Nothing could prepare us, though, for the total affront to the senses that we faced in Sorong. The harbor was crowded with huge cargo and fishing ships, ferries on full throttle with massive wakes trailing them, double-masted dive phinisis (majestic wooden schooners used to take diving tourists throughout the islands) congregated together, and small water taxis skittered busily here and there. From the shore we could hear the rattle of motorcycles and chainsaws. Then the local DJ (someone with massive speakers blaring from a house that balanced on stilts over the water) decided it was time for entertainment. What started as Indonesian music, suddenly became oddly recognizable as - could it be? Christmas carols? Well, I guess it is November, but not what I expected at all. Just when I was getting into the Christmas spirit and humming along, the music changed again. Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer was replaced by the mournful sound of the Muslim's afternoon call to prayer.

I hadn't even stepped foot on shore yet, and already I was overwhelmed with the foreign sights and sounds. This would be the biggest city we've been to for a year and a half (since our time in New Zealand), but rather than be excited to explore and do some shopping, I found myself quite content to stay in our little floating bubble. All the unfamiliar that awaited onshore intimidated me. How would we ever adapt to this?

**Vellela – May 2018:** Vellela entered Indonesia at Nongsa (south of Singapore) in November 2017 and headed south to Lombok then east to Flores, north to Buton, Wakatobi, Ambon, Raja Ampat. Cleared Indonesia from Sorong late April 2018 and presently in Kavieng, PNG, preparing to head east to the Solomons. From our experience it certainly was NOT the best weather choice. Though we have had westerly winds they have been strong, erratic, volatile and unpredictable. But some boats that left 2 months later than us had better conditions.

**Gaia – January 2014:** On January 5th this year we sailed off to Ninigo, PNG, from Waisai in Raja Ampat. We did a lot of research before we left. We read as much as possible on the internet, talk to as many people that might have info, and we investigated the weather.

Safety is a real issue. Overall you can say that mainland is a no go area for yachties. But on the internet is also a lot written about areas where we are very welcome. We've plotted them, and the ones we've seen so far has been the best of all places. Ninigo, Hermit, New Ireland, and right now we are in Atauu (last PNG atoll). After this we continue to Vanuatu, due May. To make it easy for you I will list all our anchorages at the bottom.

But season is a different thing. There is only 1 moment you can travel from West to East, and that is during the NW season. And that season starts somewhere in December and ends

somewhere end of April. The best months are Jan-March. During the season you will have the wind with you and also the current.

All the bad stories we read came from sailors that were sailing against the season. Especially if you want to sail to the East against the very strong SE season.

If you also want to go all the way to Vanuatu, make sure you don't reach Vanuatu in the middle of cyclone season. The non-cyclone season is from the end of April till November.

Here are the places we stopped along the way (dates are arrival dates):

3+4/1/2014	Raja Ampat, Waigeo, Waisai	00 25.985S	130 49.460E
12/1/2014	Ninigo, Longan Isl.	01 13.068S	144 18.208E
4/2/2014	Sikalil	01 10.248S	144 23.541E
9/2/2014	Ninigo, Heina	01 07.873S	144 28.871E
21/2/2014	Hermit Atol	01 33.034S	145 01.587E
23/2/2014	Hermit Atol, Luf	01 30.956S	145 04.837E
16/03/2014	New Ireland, Steffenstrait	02 41.788S	150 39.406E
18/03/2014	New Ireland, Kavieng	02 35.215S	150 46.857E
26/03/2014	New Ireland, Albatros Channel	02 43.605S	150 41.799E
3/4/2014	Atol Tauu, PNG	04 42.540S	156 56.337E

**Gillaroo – August 2010 – Ninigo to Borneo:** Slow trip from PNG to Borneo, less than 10kts of wind most of the time. All the crew are pretty frustrated with the mainsail as in these conditions it is just a pig – too heavy and too much roach so it wants to flog away all the time and we often had to keep it reefed.

Saw a lot of dolphins and some pilot whales but caught no fish – we did get visited way out to sea by 3 Phillipine fishermen in miniature 9' plywood boats (their mother ship was away in the distance) powered by lawnmower engines who gave us a pile of tuna !

### **2.1.3 To/From Solomons and Vanuatu**

**Patience - November 2019:** We sailed directly from Luganville, Vanuatu to PNG, Rabaul as we start running short of time and because we didn't want to do a 2-week stop in the Solomons for \$500 fees. The trip from Vanuatu to PNG was very interesting to say at least. 9 days total, great sailing winds for the first 6 and squally hell in moonless nights thereafter. Broken headsail halyard and furler lines, hove too with a torn and stuck genoa in 30+ kts, sail which had to be cut loose and so on. But we made it and arrived in Rabaul with more stories to tell.

**Mokisha – May 2013:** We have arrived in Port Morseby, Papua New Guinea. We left the Solomon Islands, for the second time, June 8th. We got beat up so bad in the first attempt we went back to Rendova to make some repairs and gather resolve. With the second attempt, on a good forecast, we got beat up again but we persevered. The second time was complicated by Colleen suffering the onset of Dengue fever. Her symptoms came on with the bad weather. We didn't see the sun for the next 2 days. The second night featured torrential rain and frequent ship traffic.

We arrived in the Louisiades at the SE end and entered the Calvados Group at Snake Passage. This 6 mile passage from sea was featureless and could not be seen until we were within less than a quarter mile. From there we sailed about 10 miles per day through the Calvados to Verdano and then checked in at Misima. At this point we were on the fast track to Port Moresby so we could be in the Sail Indonesia Rally to Kupang, Indonesia.

**Shango – November 2012:** We left Vongo Island at the north end of Vella Lavella, Solomon Islands in the wee hours of the morning. When we looked back at the Island an hour later it was completely engulfed in rain. Timing is everything.

Our plan was to cut south of Bougainville through Bougainville Strait then to head offshore to Nuguria Atoll, two hundred and seventy-ish miles to the northeast. Our early start had us heading through the Strait during daylight although I'm not sure that was necessary given the placid weather we experienced.

In the afternoon we encountered a succession of unsettlingly large logs on our route. This, combined with a spectacular lightening show over Bougainville made for an anxious night. Once we were beyond the coast though, the logs pretty much disappeared as did the threatening weather. The rest of the passage was clear blue sky and the sound of our diesel engine.

#### **2.1.4 From Philippines**

**Soggy Paws – January 2019 – From Davao to Ninigos:** We left HOV Marina on Samal Island (Gulf of Davao) on January 1, and by Jan 28, we were anchored in the Ningos. Our trip was as follows:

Jan 1, anchored in anchorage SE Samal

Jan 2-3, Underway overnight to S end of Talaud Island

Jan 3, Anchored overnight at S end of Talaud Island

Jan 4-5, Underway overnight to Rau Island (SW Morotai)

Jan 5, Anchored overnight at S end of Rau

Jan 6, Daysail to NE Halmahera, anchored overnight

Jan 7-8, Underway overnight to Wayag, Raja Ampat Indo

Jan 9, Wayag (you should stay longer!)

Jan 10, Daysail to N Coast Waisai

Jan 11, Daysail to SE Tip Waisai

Jan 12, Rest Day

Jan 13, Daysail to Pulau Amsterdam (52nm, 1 hr sailing)

Jan 14, Daysail P Amsterdam to ?? N Coast NG (52nm, 4 hrs sailing)

Jan 15, Daysail to ?? N Coast PNG (

Jan 16-17, Overnight to Biak

Jan 17-21, Biak, Check in, Check Out, Diesel, Laundry, Groceries, 1 day Diving

Jan 22, Daysail to Mios Weundi

Jan 23, Mios Weundi

Jan 24, Daysail to Manggawandi

Jan 25-28 In Ninigos!!!

The winds were mostly northerly in the first part, but once we got down into the Waisai area, the winds became mostly NW, and light for the most part, all the way to Biak. Between Manggawandi to Ninigos, and while we were in the Ninigos, the forecast consistently underpredicted the amount of wind (5-10 kts NW forecast ended up being 15-20 WNW).

We had following current, this time of year, pretty much the whole way. Averaged at least .75 knot behind us, sometimes up to 2kt.

You definitely want to make this run when the season is right for the direction you are going. People who try to go east in the June-July-August months or west in the December-Jan-Feb months are usually very unhappy with their passages. The shoulder months are doable as long as you have a good engine and plenty of diesel. You also need to always be aware of passing lows/typhoons going by in Micronesia and the Philippines (watch this weather:

<http://www.prh.noaa.gov/data/GUM/AFDPQ>

<http://www.metoc.navy.mil/jtwc/products/abpwweb.txt>

Though we chose to day hop as much as possible, it would be easily possible to make the trip from the Philippines this time of year direct to the Ninigos (or further on to Kavieng). Just follow the wind, a little south, then SE.

**Forza – 2000:** We left Surigao late July and had very light winds mainly from the SW, so we took 17 days with a lot of motoring. Initially current was south going before we picked up the equatorial counter current but south of the equator we ran into strong adverse current which we then battled all the way to the Hermit Isles and, in fact all the way to New Ireland.

If we did the trip again we would seriously consider staying north of the equator in the counter current until north of Kavieng, New Ireland then dropping down. We found the wind, swell and current combination meant we could make southing fairly easily but easting was a real problem. Boats following later in August had better wind from the SW but still found the same easting problems as they approached PNG.

Once south of the equator we experienced frequent heavy squalls with tremendous thunderstorms.

### **2.1.5 To/From Australia**

**Obiwan – September 2022 – Townsville to Alotau:** After visiting the Whitsunday Island, we headed to Townsville Marina to prepare for our passage to Alotau, Papua New Guinea.

We had to wait for 3 weeks before having a good weather window to cross to Alotau.

Around half of the passage a strong current from southeast started pushed us on the side, so what should have been a beam reach became close-hauled.



The current was so strong that our autopilot couldn't keep the head, so we had to hand steering for long periods. We also checked our rudder and shaft, thinking something was broken but then realized it was only the current.

Some squall during the passage, but nothing too bad.

**Totem – October 2012 – Bundaburg to Louisiades:** Landfall at Bramble Haven – Wednesday 03 October, somewhat beat up from the last three days of winds/seas.

This was a passage best characterized by highs and lows. That's a bad pun, because it really was defined by the high and low pressure areas affecting our conditions. It was a good reminder that even with a great looking outlook, weather is not predictable.

We left with a forecast of SE wind at 15-20 kts. This would have made a beautiful, 4.5 day passage on our most comfortable point of sail. What happened was that a high pressure system formed a ridge that caused the wind to drop and back, which meant we were going upwind in little apparent wind.

That was the fun part.

When we were a couple of days out, a weak low formed around the same area that was our destination point – the eastern end of the Louisiades. Because of this low, we knew we'd have a lot of wind- and soon. What we didn't know is how it would play out. We crossed our fingers and hoped that a squash zone wouldn't form between the systems.

Lucky for us, the low stayed weak. It created a trough (trof) in an east-west line just south of Papua New Guinea, producing a band of squalls to cross before our landfall.

As we sailed through the 500-ish miles below the trough, the wind clocked behind us and increased, along with sea state. We had sustained winds up to 45 kts and seas at 4 meters (the occasional gusts over 50 and 5m seas thrown in for fun)- both at levels above the evolving forecast for our area.

This was not so much fun. This characterized our last three days and nights of the passage.

Ultimately, we changed our landfall point several times to allow for a more comfortable or safer angle. Instead of four-ish days, it took over six. And in weather like that, there was not much fishing!

There is a great deal of good woven into the challenges of the passage. First, a shoutout to our friends on Ceilydh (<http://maiaaboard.blogspot.com>). Evan could see what was happening, and started to send us regular weather updates. Although we have good access to weather information on demand through our HF radio, there is data he can access online has that we aren't able to get (like swell direction, which was good to know!). When we are tired, and literally buried in the conditions, it's really helpful to have another set of eyes to evaluate the reports.

We are so impressed with how Totem came through: the boat handled adverse conditions extremely well. We were comfortable and dry below. Jamie needed to hand steer the swells a few times, but the autopilot usually gave a better course than we could by hand. Meals were prepared ahead, so when the bad weather hit (and boiling a pot of water was out of the question, even on a gimbaled stove) all we had to do was heat up a stew. Not least of all, the kids were amazing. It is a lot to ask for them to spend basically a week reading, but we had very few complaints.

It's really good to be able to look back on the passage from an anchorage. Bramble Haven is just that: a haven, with turquoise water and a wooded motu with just enough cover to shelter us from the wind outside the atoll. A handful of Kiwi boats are here, waiting for weather to sail for Australia. Shortly after the hook was set, fishermen in a dugout canoe came alongside with a gorgeous lobster (painted crayfish) on offer, and we had an invitation for sundowners on the beach.

[Full post on blog.](#)

### **Maranatha – May 2012 – Herald Cay:**

Anchorage Waypoint: 16° 56.436S 149° 11.626E

Approach Waypoint No 1: 16° 56.107S 149° 11.234E

Approach Waypoint No 2: 16° 56.264S 149° 11.514E

Waypoint No. 1 clears the outer reef area. It is a straight run to waypoint No. 2.

From there it is necessary to eye-ball to the anchorage point as there are a couple of very noticeable bombies which are easily avoided. Anchor in sand in 4 – 5 metres.

While not part of the Louisiades it is a good stop-over from Bowen or Townsville to Misima especially if clearing from Bowen and using the Flinders Passage. The bird-life is incredible and friendly.

## **2.2 *Between Stops in PNG***

### **2.2.1 *Heading East Between Ninigos and Kavieng***

**Rainbow Safari – April 2022:** While in Ninigo in mid April, the wind turned to Easterly, and we waited a week for a break, before continuing our journey to Kavieng. We chose a route past the Hermit Islands (passing just Southwest), and then S of Manus. This section was easy and flat seas. As we reached S of Baluan Island the Easterly picked back up, along with an approx. 1knot current setting to the Southwest. This made for uncomfortable two days beating against wind, current and waves in confused seas, until we finally reached some cover near New Hanover and then made our way into Kavieng.

I had expected three, but it took 4.5 days nonstop from Ninigo to Kavieng, and the second half was not pleasant. I did question my routing but from what i have heard the passage N of Manus can also have a counter current and is not much better.

**Soggy Paws – Feb 2019: Ninigo to Kavieng via Hermits and New Hanover:** We day-hopped from Ninigo to Hermits, and then moved east to Alacrity Harbor (NE corner). Navigation inside Hermits was OK using satellite photos and good light, even monohulls. From there it was a 3 day 2 night jump to the west end of New Hanover, which we were able to sail mostly downwind the whole way. We skipped Manus because the Ninigoans told us it was dangerous. (We stopped in the east end of Manus on the way back).

From New Hanover, we daysailed inside the reef to the west end of New Hanover, and then another day sail to Kavieng. In February, the wind was with us the whole way. Easy sailing.

**Screensaver – July 2017 – Ninigo to Kavieng:** People talk about getting the timing currents and winds right for East PNG route as we are doing. Technically we have it wrong, with wind

and current against us. Personally though I suspect this would have made little difference (to this point) as there is next to no wind in these latitudes, never mind it being forward of the beam. Screensaver will actually sail in 10-12 knts if the wind is forward of the beam, but it will not sail at all with that little aft of the beam. As for the current, I suspect that has added 0.5knt against us on average. So if you come this way expect to burn lots of fuel and pay for it.

**Miss Behave – August 2014 – Ninigo to Kavieng:** This trip is rough. Winds and currents are playing merry hell. I also have a leaking raw water pump bearing which I will need to replace in Kavieng. We are ok but this is not pleasant. Last night we were hit with a 45kt winds and squall which lasted an hour. We should be in Kavieng tomorrow midday.

Later... We are about 6 hours West of Kavieng at the moment. As for the journey East from Ninigo--it was not easy. We first headed NE and had good winds and current for 16 hours but there the wind turned NE forcing me to tack south. I did one tack and decided, based on the gibs, to sail west of Manus Island until I got a good wind angle. This happened and coincided with the southern tip of the reefs south of Manus.

The reefs are marked as incomplete survey but I can assure you they are there and very dangerous. I tacked east when I had a clear line for the Western coast of New Holland and we managed one complete run with 80nm of motoring to the western most tip of New Hanover.

We got slammed by a big storm on the way with 40kt winds and heavy rain. We had to motor because the wind was NNW at 7kts. Figure that out?

The gibs were horribly wrong.

I decided to take the West coast route to Kavieng and glad we did so since we were able to sail the daytime seabreeze along the coast.

Last night we stayed at a great little bay at: 02 39.741S 150 23.220E. Best to enter on a heading of 300Mag. 7metres in mud with good holding. The village name is MAGAM (South coast of New Hanover). We were the first boat to visit them in their memory.

Summary of this leg: We left Ninigo last week and initially headed NE looking for the counter current. The wind died 100m out so I tacked and ended up sailing West of Manus till we could tack for New Hanover. We did a straight tack which took 4 days. There is nowhere to anchor unless you have 200m of chain. We got hit with a big storm that lasted 2 hours, 45kt winds and heaps of rain.

So far we have used 300 litres of diesel since leaving Palau which is good as we have not had to use the jerry cans. The watermaker is a must unless you have good rainwater collection on the boat.

**Anui – Sep 2011 – Hermit Islands to Kavieng:** We moved on after 5 days on the longest leg of our PNG adventure – 360 nautical miles East to Kavieng. This took us four days as there were strong currents and head winds. Scott tried hard to sail whenever we could as we didn't have enough fuel to motor there and so it was a tiring few days of constant sail changes and tweaking.

Vessels travelling East from Jayapura in West Papua into Papua New Guinea should note that safe opportunities for refuelling are very limited until Kavieng in New Ireland, some 670 nautical miles from Jayapura. It should also be noted that we experienced significant current against us

(up to 3 knots) the whole way and that the prevailing wind is East/ South East, making sailing a challenge.

### **2.2.2 Heading West Between Kavieng and Ninigos**

**Soggy Paws – Sep/Oct 2019:** Heading west in Sep/Oct, we did not go to Kavieng, but instead went from Rabaul to Kimbe Bay along the coast, and then headed N from Kimbe to Garove Island, and then up to Manus. The Kimbe to Manus leg is documented [here](#).

From Manus we overnighted to Hermits and then daysailed to Ninigos. The Manus to Hermits hop was 2 days 1 night 149 nm anchorage to anchorage. Took 28 hrs, 24 of of them with the engine on. Wind very light southerly.

The Hermits to Ninigos (NW pass) leg was also pretty much a motor, except for 2 hours of too much wind in 2 squalls with winds to 35 knots.

**Wandering Waterhorse – December 2018:** Miles to cover: 898 NM (all the way to Biak)

Estimated passage time: 6 to 7 days.

DAY 1: Left Kavieng at 9am local time.

We are sailing this passage with our Australia friends on their catamaran, Lukim Yu. We met Denise and Jamie in Vanuatu and since then have spent time in 3 different countries with them. Our boat, being slightly larger, will be a little faster, so we will try and keep relatively close and buddy boat together, it will be nice to have another boat travelling with us, as this big blue can be very wide and lonely on your own at times.

There was actually wind as we left Kavieng Harbour, Papua New Guinea, so we got to sail for most of the day at varying speeds. Up to 9.4kts at one stage.

Nice to save some diesel. We will potentially need it all with the calm that is predicted on the weather routing maps. We loaded up with 700L, so hoping this will get us there!

Had a huge squall for an hour or so directly on the nose with big 2 m waves. Super uncomfortable and things inside went flying, this was a bit of a wake up as we have had none of this for a long time. Everything was re stowed easily and no breakages. It passed and sea settled.

We saw whales in the afternoon!!! We followed them at a distance for a while and tried to fish a few work ups. Nothing.

My first watch was entirely uneventful, the second had a huge rain and lightning squall come through, with all the attendant issues.

DAY 2:

Super relaxing and calm day, this is the passage I had dreamed of. Enjoying being out here in the sun, although it is super-hot and being windless means we are all sweating buckets!

You drink and drink and drink glass after glass of water and still hardly go to the toilet as it is just stifling.

Kids watching their own reflections in the inky water

No fish as of yet. Are there no fish in this part of the ocean like everyone says? Or is it that our speeds are slightly lower than usual so trawling the lines is not working?

Night comes again, and it is still glassy calm and easy.

I watch a movie at the helm on my watch and look around me at the open emptiness that are our surroundings.

Our buddy boat is a wee bit behind now as we had sailed for a bit and got ahead and also motored faster for a while trying to fish during the day. I look for them on the AIS but cannot seem to see them.

DAY 3: Entirely uneventful. Glass smooth seas. Hot as a mother. Did catch 1 average sized tuna and it had weird white colored flesh that seemed to fall apart very easily when touched and filleted. Not the usual.

DAY 4: Day 4 messed with us from the beginning. My morning shift had the winds building and sea very choppy. It was manageable and comfortable still.

We were able to sail which was good. Then it got worse. Super mega squall happened when 4 large squalls merged. We had a water spout from sea to sky and thought we needed to get the heck out of there.

We then spent almost 12 hours, gaining bugger all ground, going up and down and back and forward to try and get away from the ever-changing winds and systems.

It was rough and it sucked big time.

Contact was kept with Lukim Yu who were a few hours behind us now, as we tried to give them some advance warning of what was coming. They too, got slammed by it all.

Took until almost 10pm for it to be an organized sea again, still big rollers but no more white caps.

I cooked stir fry for dinner which was hilarious in the circumstances. We were headed for a tiny island that we had basic sat imagery of, while trying to get north – also only comfortable way with waves at that point, tried to anchor but too rough.

Wish like mad we had stopped at the Ninigo islands that we had passed at first light. Pretty happy for today to be almost over. Both uber tired.

There are huge ships out here. 300 m ones, crossing outer paths regularly during the night. I am glad for AIS which tells us their information, speed over ground and direction etc. so we can make sure that we will not crash into them, it gives you time to work out courses and change sailing angles accordingly.

For the rest of their passage, see [Sailing To From Indonesia](#).

**Field Trip – September 2017:** We are still underway for Luff island, and are about 25NM from the entrance. Let's just say the sailing at these latitudes can be challenging. The forecasts (and we use four different models each time we plan a trip) are just flat out inaccurate at best. We might get the forecasted wind for 3-6 hours and then it will swing 180 degrees, drop to dead calm, or get smacked with 25-30kts 90 degrees off the prevailing breeze. It's expected, but frustrating at times. We have boycotted using our engines, because we like the challenge of sailing up here, but it is SLOW going. In the past 14 hours our average SOG is 2.7kts....with

1kt+ of favorable current. We drifted for 5 hours with zero wind and all sails down. We're not in a hurry so it is actually rather nice and on a positive note the sail changes every 3-4 hours keeps me busy. The big news is we got to test out our Parasailor spinnaker in a 27kt gust of wind. I'm happy to report it did not blow out and we had a fast (12kts), but white knuckled run for about 15 minutes.

We left New Hanover when all of our weather prediction models promised wind enough to sail. SO, of course that meant that there was absolutely zero wind for the entire first day and a half! It would be months before we'd be in a place to refuel, so Mark was going nuts, trying as many sail configurations as he could think of to catch even the slightest puff of breeze. Finally, we decided just to take advantage of the positive current and drift for a half a day. Our average boat speed was a whopping 2.1 knots!! Would we ever get to the infamous Luf?

Three days passed before the winds kicked up and pushed us to Luf, but the sporadic sailing had delayed our arrival time to 8 pm that night. We had to make a decision. Go through the wide pass at night or drift around outside all night until daybreak.

Recently, there had been news of a few family yachts that had run aground on reefs - one that was attempting to enter a pass after dark. We checked, double-checked, zoomed in, zoomed out, compared charts and satellite images, read blogs and compendium notes. Finally, it was decided that we would enter the pass after sunset. I won't say that doubts didn't criss-cross in my mind, but the pass was over 3 km wide and very deep, without obstructions. We could get through the pass and anchor out in the open area just to the south in 20ish meters. Navigations went off without a hitch, we anchored and slept for the night before navigating further into the lagoon to drop the hook near the village at Luf Island. Well, somewhat near the village...

We anchored at 01 33.42S 145 00.2E

Weather: 50% cloud, 27C, 1006.4 baro, 5-7 kts ENE

We just arrived safely and dropped the hook. Given the large entrance and open area inside we came in under satellite charts no issues at dusk. We will get some sleep tonight and then head over to the Luff Island anchorage. There is a lot to explore here with some good diving. Stats from the trip were 67hrs for 324NM, averaging 4.5kts. That is not terrible given we spent a lot of time drifting at 2.5kts waiting for wind. We got a nice punch of wind the last five hours today, 18kts out of the NE (forecast was SE winds 10-12kts) that moved us at 7-8kts to the entrance of the reef.

**Totem - November 2012 – Kavieng headed West :** Giving up on waiting for wind, we topped up our diesel in Kavieng and then broke away a couple of days ago to begin working our way around the top of New Hanover under power. We will have to come to terms at some point that we are in the doldrums and between the change of seasons, and so there is probably a lot of motoring in our near future!

**Field Trip – October 2017 – Hermits to Ninigos:** It has been a slow drift to the Ninigos. We have had zero wind for the past 12 hours and drifted all night. Current is 1.5kts so we are making some progress. It is a glassy lake out here. All is well.

We averaged 2.9kts for the entire trip but it was a good trip. The kids loved the overnight drift and thought it was 'cool'. We caught the biggest giant trevally we have ever caught at about 20kg. Took me 20 min to land the fish as it was huge.

### **2.2.3 Between Kavieng and Tabar Island**

**Field Trip – August 2017 – Tabar Island to Kavieng:** Speed: 4knts, 02 52.2S 151 57.0E

Weather: 30% cloud, 28C, 1006.5 baro, 5-8 kts SE

We are currently underway to Kaveing, PNG. We expect to arrive in the afternoon. The sail has been good, but slow with light winds. We have been wing on wing most of the way, with the occasional broad reach on port and starboard. Needless to say we've been busy working the sails in these light and variable winds, but no complaints as we have been able to sail everywhere since leaving the Solomons, with zero motoring in the past six weeks. We will clear into PNG tomorrow, pick up a package, buy some provisions and head out probably over the weekend to the NW outer islands of PNG for more diving.

We arrived to Kavieng around 1pm yesterday after a great sail. We checked into PNG "officially" and it was the easiest checking we've done. It took about 15 min for customs and immigration. Quarantine was 10 mins of paperwork and we were finished. Total cost \$18 USD. We will be here for 3-4 days before leaving for our next stop on the outer islands.

**Miss Behave – August 2014 – Kavieng to Tabar:** We left Kavieng at 8am and armed with a new water pump and overhauled turbo exhaust I was fearless until 10 minutes out. The engine overheated again, but I was able to solve the problem, so we continued on.

We plan to motor sail to Tabar Island on the East Coast of New Ireland and perhaps stay there tomorrow night. We are told not to swim at night due to the crocs. Judging by the number of large croc skeletons at Nusa resort I will not doubt the advice.

We sailed through the night and sailed for a spot recommended by FORZA and other cruisers. We motored through Saraware passage never seeing less than 15 metres under the keel then headed north to Tatau Island. We went further up the inlet and found a clean bottom in 12metres.

**Aug 18:** Our plans are to sail/motor down the East coast of New Ireland then look at the winds and decide on which side of Bougainville island to go. West side has many shoals but may have good winds. We will make that decision tomorrow PM. The GRIB winds are very wrong and I have given up using them.

Today we left Tatau Island and headed towards Lihir Island until we had a good tack for Cape Lemeris. We had ESE at 12kts. We then used the onshore wind for a while until late afternoon. We had 1kt of current setting to the SE which was not marked anywhere on my maps.

As I type this we are getting a NNW at 12kts and are on a STBD Gybe so go figure that one out! We plan to stay in Ghizo a few days then visit one or two nearby islands before heading to the Lousiades and Mackay if the winds play ball. I have seen enough to know we will be back to this neck of the woods when the winds are better.

### **2.2.4 Budi Budi to Kokopo**

**Totem – November 2012:** We had a very uneventful sail from Budi Budi atoll up to Kokopo, at the NE corner of New Britain island. I use the term 'sail' very loosely here, as we motored or motor sailed almost the entire distance- about 325 miles. The sea state matched what we experienced floating along the equator during Totems passage to the Marquesas from Mexico:

a tie for the most board-flat, almost oily, seas we've seen. We saw schools of tuna but had no luck ourselves, catching only a skipjack (and nearly losing it to a shark as we pulled in the line).

### **2.2.5 Louisiades to Port Moresby**

**Alba – July 2015:** (They left Panasia for a 365 mile trip to Port Moresby.)

To get to Port Moresby, we're following the south coast of Papua New Guinea, aiming to stay 20 miles offshore and, for some of the night, we picked up a favourable ½ - 1 knot current, which is pushing us along nicely. We have to sail 365 miles and if we get lucky with the current, and average 6.5 knots, then we might be able to make it with just 2 nights sailing.

Our route to the pass next to Uruba Reef was very hard on the wind, so we motor-sailed for three hours, only achieving 4 knots because we were constantly stopped by the large head-on waves. We cleared the pass by half past eleven and were finally able to ease the sheets a little. But it was still tough for a few hours because the wind was 25 knots at 60 degrees off our port bow.

As the afternoon progressed, the wind settled down to 15-20 knots and backed, so by sunset we were on a pleasant broad reach doing 6-7 knots.

Apart from dodging a few ships, the night was pleasant, but very, very dark with no moon.

**Day 2:** We had squalls that caught us up every hour - in some the wind picked up from 20 knots to 30 knots with heavy rain and others just gave us rain.

It cleared up in the afternoon, but the wind picked up a little to 20-25 knots and we had 3 metre waves making it a boisterous ride.

There's quite a lot of shipping that is following our route, so we've been monitoring the AIS closely.

Just before dark, I rigged up our spinnaker pole to port in anticipation of turning more downwind as we follow the coast line. It was a wild night. The wind wasn't too bad at 25-30 knots, but the waves were large and steep making the boat slew around and surf up to 10 knots. It was hard to relax when on-watch and very hard to sleep when off-watch.

**Day 3:** By eight a.m., we'd done 170 miles in 24 hours - our best run ever. We only had 45 miles to go, so we looked forward to getting to Port Moresby in the late afternoon.

The wind continued at 20-25 knots from the SSE. We gybed the main as we turned the corner following the coast and then continued on a fast broad reach on starboard tack. We had a good angle to sail through Basilisk Passage and, once inside the barrier reef, had a lovely sail into Port Moresby in calm seas.

**Mokisha – June 2013:** In Misima Colleen was still having relapses of Dengue symptoms but we had to press on--the Rally schedule monkey was on our back. The next 10 dayhops were 30-40 miles in mostly overcast and squally weather.

We ventured into the reefs at Orangerie Bay on the S side of PNG where the few local people we met said they had never seen a yacht in those waters. Using very accurate AUS charts from Chartworld we were encouraged to venture where no one we knew of had gone and the Sailing Directions, Pub 164, said were not adequately charted.



Just as the coast started to turn slightly N we had clearer weather and Colleen's symptoms finally abated. We arrived at Port Moresby on Sunday, June 30th and anchored in the Royal Papua Yacht Club's "millpond" as Foehn wind bullets screamed down the canyons into the anchorage. Gene and Sheri, s/y Reflections, arrived a week earlier and arranged a large boat slip. We moved in behind them the next day. Sometimes you don't know the weight of your burden until you put it down. That night we slept as if in a coma.

### **2.2.6 Kavieng to Rabaul**

**Soggy Paws – Mar 2019:** Leaving Kavieng, we anchored overnight in Albatross Channel, and left early in the morning for an overnight to Duke of York Islands. We spent one night in Duke of York and then had a rousing sail into Rabaul. On the way past Djaul Island, we diverted into a bay in the middle of the N coast, that I've named Mission Bay. It is anchorable, and would cut some miles off the trip, but not enough to make it solely on day hops.

Though there was a little wind, we pretty much motored the whole 140 miles from Albatross to Duke of York in light and variable winds.

At approximately 03-08.2 S / 151-12.9 E, there was a line of debris including large logs. Try to pass this spot during daylight.

On arrival at Mioko Harbor in the Duke of York Islands, we were asked for an anchoring fee of 20 Kina. A young man without much English paddled up to us and handed us an "invoice", stamped and signed by a local woman. We refused to pay the fee without seeing paperwork proving the fee was legitimate and knowing what it was going toward, but our buddy boats all did. One of our boats was actually first asked for a 500 Kina anchoring fee!! Apparently the local council has decided that passing yachts are a good source of income.

Later a guy in a canoe who said he was a teacher at the school, warned us not to pay (or donate) any fee that was supposedly going to the school, without seeing the ledger book that the school keeps. Apparently some unscrupulous people have solicited a donation for the school that never found its way to the school.

### **2.2.7 Rabaul to Kimbe Bay (N Coast of New Britain)**

**Patience – Nov 2019:** From the Duke of York Islands, we made our way to Kimbe via Lassul bay, Pondo Harbour, Lolobau SE anchorage, Wulai island and then to Kimbe Liamu resort. Lassul was pretty steep, rolly and buggy, Pondo Harbour was great, Lolobau was great too including the trading with the locals. There was one guy requesting 30 Kina anchoring fee but after I told him nope, he backed off and we ended up trading fruits.

Wulai island was our biggest scare and biggest luck of the journey to Kimbe. s/v Aftermath went in first and ran on the reef at 4 kts, in the evening, at high tide. Stuck solid. The charts are wrong at East entrance. With lots of luck not breaching the hull during the night by stabilizing it with anchors and lightening the boat as much as possible in the morning and ketching it off with the incoming tide we made it to Kimbe with yet another "live to tell" experience.

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** It was getting late in the year and we needed proceed west toward the Ninigos and ultimately Indonesia before the NW monsoon set in. So we made a fast cruise west along the north coast. I wish we'd had a little more time to do it in a more leisurely fashion.

With strong SE winds forecast off Rabaul, we thought we would have a nice beam reach in light winds and no seas. What we found was frustratingly variable winds that would switch 180 degrees in a matter of minutes, and quite a bit of westerly winds (usually fairly light). We had planned to take a fairly straight route from the NW corner of the Gazelle Peninsula to Kimbe, stopping every 40-50 miles at a reef anchorage (N side of Lolobau Island, Banban Island, just W of Lolobau; Wulai Island, N of Hoskins Peninsula). But we found that we had light easterlies in the morning and then afternoon headwinds from NW to SW, which slowed our progress and also made our planned anchorages (selected because they were sheltered from the SE) iffy. So we opted to take the longer route hopping along the coast, dodging patch reefs everywhere.

We anchored almost every night off a river, knowing that the river silt usually provides a reasonable anchorage. Instead of snorkeling and diving at the offshore anchorages, we did birding and river explorations at the river anchorages.

Check out the details of the stops we made [here](#) and [here](#).

### **2.2.8 Between New Ireland and Buka**

**Soggy Paws – August 2019:** We did an overnight from Ramun Bay, Buka to an anchorage a little north of English Cove. The forecast was for 10 kts SE and not a lot of rain. We were hoping for more wind, but the forecast didn't show any more wind for a week. It seemed an easy downwind run. The satellite picture did show some clouds moving west, east of Buka, but there are always clouds in this area.

Well, we ended up with west winds, which eventually went more SW, so it was sailable but light. We had torrential rains all night, but fortunately no huge winds, and by morning, NW winds (on our nose) at 15 knots. That was certainly not the passage we expected.

We ended up coming in under the lee of the east side of the southern tip of New Ireland, and then creeping around the corner into sheltered waters on the SW side of New Ireland.

Based on our two passages, I would not trust any forecast in this area.

**Soggy Paws – Mar 2019:** We did an overnight from English Cove, New Ireland (SW corner) to Queen Corola Harbor (NW corner) of Buka. The OSCAR current information indicated we should have a SE setting current most of the way, and light westerly winds. We ended up with wind AND current on the nose, changing our planned speed to from 5.5-7 knots to a lowly 4 knots, motoring the whole way.

It seemed the wind changed nearly every 15 minutes for the first half of the passage, requiring many sail changes. Then, it filled in from the SE at about 8 knots and stayed there the rest of the night. I got new forecasts during the night from both the GFS and Predict Wind, and not a single forecast forecast the wind we had.

### **2.2.9 Between Manus and Kimbe**

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** The forecast for wind in late September was "light and variable, sometimes SE". We hopped from Kimbe Town, where we cleared out with Customs for Manus, to Tuare Islet (N Kimbe Bay) to Garove Island, and then a double-overnight to Manus.

We went west from the Garove Caldera and close to the east end of Ningau Island (aka Mundua?). It was a sunny day and calm weather, so we cut through the long reef that sticks out

east of Ningau, going very close around Cape Kurabo. To our surprise, there were about a hundred people standing on the shore watching us go by! It looked like they had let school out to gawp at us. The east end of Ningau has pretty white sand beaches, but even in very calm weather, it looked swelly.

After dark, we saw an eerie green light to the west of us—we surmised it was a fishing FAD, as it was very bright, fairly distant, and didn't move. We saw another one over the horizon during the night, and two fishing trawlers moving around during the night—none had AIS.

This patch of ocean seemed to be fairly debris free.

We ended up motoring for all but 1.5 hours between Garove and Manus (45.5 hours total engine time, on one engine). 3 days, 2 nights. Very calm.

### 3 Eastern Offshore Islands

**Maranatha – Oct 2006** - SAWASAWAGA BAY (Sariba Island)

Good anchorage. Beware of the very strong tidal current in Sawa Sawaga passage – up to seven knots.

No waypoint given, and I can't locate this one, so it's parked here for now.

#### 3.1 *Louisiades*

**Anui – October 2011:** The Louisiades are frequently visited by cruising yachts, especially since the Louisiade Rally from Cairns began four years ago. This rally is a great idea, with a group of yachts spending 6 weeks in the archipelago delivering useful items to these remote islands – water tanks, medical supplies, clothing, toys etc. The rally participants are willing to pay cash for the carvings and baskets and freely give many items of value. This is lovely of them and much appreciated, but we found that this made the experience of the Louisiades quite different from the other island groups. The local people were more inclined to come out to the boat just to ask for things – something we hadn't experienced much elsewhere – and to be quite focused on cash, though this is of limited use to them.

##### 3.1.1 *Language Issues*

**Totem – January 2013:** Connecting with people in the places we visit, learning about our similarities and differences, is something I truly enjoy. Demonstrating interest by knowing some of their language is a great way to start.

This is complicated by the vast number of languages we faced, first in Papua New Guinea and now here in Indonesia. Tok Pisin (pidgin) and English are actually the two official PNG languages, but everyone speaks a local dialect (and often several other neighboring dialects). The range of that dialect may be limited to a speck of an island, a valley, or even a village. They are strikingly different- truly mutually unintelligible, as opposed to tweaks on a single language. Seems daunting!

It turns out that there is a dominant local dialect in much of the Louisiades that simplifies the process- Misima, the largest island, covers many of the islands at the eastern end. Tok Pisin isn't used much in this area- unless they've had education beyond primary years, most people aren't exposed to it much. But many people speak Misima dialect, even if they aren't in the relatively large area it encompasses.

#### **Misima Dialect words and phrases**

good morning	melaluga waiwaisana	from dawn to midmorning
good day (really, 10-3)	alalati waiwasana	this is used during the hot part of the day
good afternoon	kokoyave waiwaisana	from about 3pm until nightfall
good evening	bulin waiwai sana	bulin literally means 'star'
goodbye	kai yun	
thank you	ateu owa	literally, heart person. Sweet.
what's your name?	halam ek?	both the 'h' and the 'k' are nearly silent

my name is (name)	alau (name)	
his/ner name is (name)	alula na (name)	
what are you doing?	hau na ku gigi nor?	use this when speaking to several people
what are you doing?	hau na u gigi nor?	use this when speaking to just one person
just living	hau minamina	this is the common response
how are you?	ham nam gai wa?	
I'm good	am nam wai si	this is the common response
where are you going?	gao na na?	
I'll be back	a na ki te wa	this is the common response
good	wai si	also, i wai si: it's good.
very good	wai si hot	also used for delicious
bad	inak	
bad man	inak kina	
trading	pem penpewa	
you give	u pem	
I give	ya pewa	
sister/brother	taliu	not literally a relative- common reference
sister/brother	gan	for an elder/respectful
what do you want?	hau na nu wam?	
I want (item)	nu wam (item)	
do you have...	tab...	
Do you have bananas?	tab suva?	
he/she/it	he	
they	i	
sail / sailing	kuki	
sail to Misima	kuki Misima	
let's sail	ta kuki	
cooking	liga liga	
washing (body)	hig hig	
washing (dishes)	ul ul	
don't!	bahi wa!	
don't do it	bahi wa nu gi nor.	
come here	unem	
get down	ulau	

swim	gayu	
building a house	himi tao tao	
sit down	mi si yo	
garden	eyowa	
basket	eyoga	
knife	kai ni	give me the knife: kai ni pem. VERY useful, see prior post!
water	wara	
rain	ke he i lau	
water	wara	
baby	wawaya	
old man	tonowak	
man	tau	
woman	yova	
people	gamagal	
canoe	waga	this generically refers to different boat types
medicine	sawa sawal	
modern medicine	dim dim wali sawa sawal	
drinking coconut	matu	
coconut	bwaku	
betelnut	lele	
clothes	kaliko	
banana	suva	

### 3.1.2 *Bramble Haven*

**Totem – Oct 2012:** Bramble Haven might just be the perfect landfall in Papua New Guinea, and yet it is pure serendipity that we're even here. Our original plan (a word every cruiser hesitates to use!) was to arrive at the far eastern end of the Louisiades. Prevailing winds are southeast, so this would give us a better angle for working west through the archipelago- instead of moving west to east, as most people from Australia seem to do. It would ensure we spent more of our time in an area where fewer boats tend to go. But weather trumps all, and the weather dictated that we'd be farther west.

Our knowledge about Bramble Haven comes entirely from a couple of hand-drawn maps with a few sentences to describe the island adjacent to the anchorage. From this, among the few things we knew about is that it's uninhabited. This was a welcome bit of information, as we've heard that constant streams of local visitors alongside (from the merely curious and to the persistent merchant) are one of the sometimes tiring realities of being in PNG. Exhausted from the passage, with our trade goods well stowed, it was appealing to postpone our introduction to that aspect of cruising here.

As seems to be the theme for us lately, events do not necessarily turn out the way that you expect. Within minutes of setting our anchor, the smaller outrigger paddled out to greet us with fish and lobster. We learned that three brothers and their father were on shore: they had traveled here from their home island on a fishing expedition, and were stuck until the weather abated. Reuben, Davidin, Bill and their father Sake had come more than 30 miles in a leaky open sailing canoe, with plastic tarps hand-sewn for sails.

The next morning, they were alongside again with fruit from their garden. The islet turns out to be well set up to accommodate temporary residence by fishermen, with a series of palm-thatch shelters, fish smoking sheds, fresh (though non-potable) water, and an established garden with papaya, pumpkin, and bananas.

What started as minor trepidation on our part regarding company- we just wanted to rest up peacefully- turned out to be a gift. Over the next two days, Reuben and his family became our coaches and unofficial welcoming committee. Along with Bella and Derek from s/v Pandana, Aussie cruisers who have spent many seasons cruising the Louisiades, passed easy hours talking story in the shade of the thatch shelters off the beach. We learned that Misima (the dominant island in this greater part of Milne Bay) area peoples belong to one or another of four clans, that each clan is represented by a different species of bird. I now have a smattering of the Misima dialect phrases to help us with introductions as we continue on our way. We found out what they fish for commercial sale, and what they fish to feed their families. Jamie tried to understand how they navigate, something we are interested to better understand.

As seems characteristic of those who have the least to give, they were unfailingly generous with the constant stream of offerings from what they had available. I'm not sure I've ever had so many fresh drinking coconuts and bananas. We gave, and they gave. On our third morning at Punawan, the weather moderated enough for them to make the return trip. On the way out of the lagoon, the men first sculled their outrigger to Totem to say goodbye (and pass another hand of delicious bananas). "If you come to our island, we'll kill a chicken for you to have a feast!"

And so, now we know the one other island that we must visit in the Louisiades archipelago. Good thing we're not vegetarians.

**Maranatha – 2010:** Anchorage Waypoint: 11° 11. 424S 152° 01.543E

Southern Entry Waypoint: 11° 15.516 S 151° 55.996 E

Northern Entry Waypoint: 11° 10.422 S 152° 01.213 E

Anchor in sand in 5 – 6 metres of water. The southern waypoint gives a clear run to the anchorage as does the northern waypoint. There is some low coral among the sand.

### **3.1.3 Bagaman**

**Obiwan – Sep 2022:** Anchorage 11° 08.454'S 152° 41.195'E

We had northeast winds, so we anchored in the south bay. Good holding on sand.

Few people on shore.

**2XS – September 2016:** 11-08.561 S / 152-43.393E

At last we are back in this beautiful anchorage, off a beautiful curved beach, surrounded by sand and large coral bommies, on Bagaman Island. This is where we thought we were heading, when we left Hobart in 2013...But instead of turning left at Cairns, we turned right instead and joined the Sail Komodo Indonesia Rally.

It is five years, almost exactly, since we were here last. There are more children; Moses's little boy Mark is now six, and there is a new little cheeky toddler, Kedari. Cheery Sam, from another village along the bay, who perched on the deck chatting to Rachel, looking for all the world like a dark pixie, died recently. So did Monica, one of the three girls (Monica, Maggie and Lakmae) who visited us regularly, full of giggles, in 2011. She was only fifteen and died of some mysterious complaint before she could get to hospital. Her namesake aunt Monica said, darkly, "Black magic."

But the water is the same, clear, cool, lovely. I have swum the length of the beach a couple of times already. Yesterday I saw all of my old familiar bommies, a lot of fish, one turtle, and one large and very startled shark. By large I mean about the same size as I am... I had swum over a large bommie and came upon it unaware. I hung back a bit, watching it, and then suddenly it sensed my presence and off it went into the deep blue, as fast as its fins would carry it.

Moses brought this family to visit last night - Lyla and the three boys. I heard the canoe pull up, and went out into the dark, saying, quite sternly, "No visitors until tomorrow!" A deep voice came from below, "But it is Moses!" And so of course the whole family was welcome to come on board and eat some of my leftover birthday cake.

We have had a few visitors today, but all in modest numbers, with not too many demands. My sewing machine has been whirring away. The boys seem to wear out their shorts in a most alarming manner. They wear them hanging around their legs with no bottom or penis coverage at all... They seem very happy to have them back all in one piece, with their modesty once again protected.

Tonight we have been invited to Moses and Lyla's house. They still live with his father and mother, Gulo and Sanity, with big brother Keith and big sister Barbara, and a random collection of young boys, loosely related. I have warned Pete NOT to stand up straight inside the house. Last time we went there he got to his feet and clonked his head on an overhead beam. I still have the photo of the gaping wound on his poor bald head...

Moses has been very busy working for us already. He got up at dawn and went diving - we now have the fridge stocked with beautiful lobster. And today he is cleaning the hulls, with coconut fibre. He is very strong, with a most impressive six-pack, but when I came back from my swim I found him clinging to the anchor chain puffing and panting. It is very hard work. I have been struggling away with the green slime and the barnacles and haven't made much impact at all.

Sunday morning we both went for a long swim. It was Pete's first time in the water for many weeks. He hasn't been able to get his leg wet in salty water because of his festy wound but it is now all healed up.

At eleven(ish) Moses came to get us in the banana boat, to take us to church. He and Lyla belong to a minority church with a very small congregation.



We all sat in the airy little school hall where – oh joy – there were two plastic chairs. (I really don't enjoy sitting on the floor...every bone in my body aches and creaks and complains!) The first part of the service was very nice – lots of singing, in harmony. And then a VERY VERY long sermon, NOT in English, by a severe woman who seemed to be haranguing the poor three or four worshippers in no uncertain terms. I was SO grateful to have a chair! Eustace, the minister, very kindly said that we probably didn't need to stay for the second half, which was a long session on how to prepare a sermon, so Pete and I were set free to wander along the beach, with two faithful small boys (Emanon And Elijah – Elijah is Lyla's son, a year or so older than Mark) making sure we were safe and behaving ourselves.

There was a big sailau pulled up on the beach, and much activity surrounding it. It was, apparently, due to leave within the hour, taking a cargo of children and food to school on Moturina Island, about two hours sail away.

The children were to stay there for ten weeks, keeping themselves fed from the supply of bananas, plantains, taro and dried fish being loaded aboard. Well...we know about boarding school, in PNG. If you don't bring your own food, you starve, or go home!

All along the beach in the shallows there were small boys sailing model canoes. We thought these were just lovely, and they sailed most beautifully, skimming across the sea.

Occasionally they would disappear towards the ocean, but everyone was calm about this – they will come back, apparently. The boys just set the sails, tweaking them expertly, give them a shove, and off they go.

We have given a lot of goods to our Bagaman friends. The boat was, after all, loaded with donations for the Louisiades in 2013...But the islanders have been scrupulous in their generosity to us in return (fruit, vegetables, fish, and lobster).

Dinner at the Gulo house was all very pleasant. I find it a bit difficult having to sit on the floor...nobody has tables or chairs, or indeed any furniture at all. We asked, for example, where Gulo and Mrs Gulo (Sanity) sleep and Gulo pointed at the hard wooden floor...my bones ached at the thought of it! Moses, Lyla and the three little boys sleep on a wooden platform in an annex. I asked if anyone has mattresses and Moses said, wistfully, "No. And remember when I slept on your boat, when you took me to Misima? I thought I had gone to heaven!"

We sat around, under a solar light, and had a drink (Pete had brought beer and wine, which we drank in mugs.) There were about five men, about ten small boys, and...me. Sanity and Lyla were in the kitchen annex, banished from our sight. Lyla made a brief appearance and put the food on the mat in front of us. Lobster for Pete and me, vegetables, rice. We had to eat while they all watched. The men watched politely; the little boys watched hungrily. When we had eaten, the men ate, then the boys got the leftovers. Lyla and Sanity had apparently eaten on their own in the kitchen...We did have a nice time; the food was very good, and we were made to feel very welcome.

The next night was dinner at Letma and Ali's house, in a stony little cove in the curve of the bay. They live in an idyllic setting, with their own little bit of beach, some sheltering greenery, a garden of flowers, fruit, vegetables. Ali built the house himself, and apologised for its simplicity. It is, of course, just beautiful, with a wide verandah, where we sat for an hour or so before dinner was ready. Beautiful but...very empty, although I noticed one or two cushions on the

sleeping platform, where the three little boys sleep with their mother and father and, at the other end of the platform, under the eaves, a big pile of taro.

Dinner was delicious. Local veggies and – four boiled lobster to share!

**Songlines – September 2011:** When Waiyaki, a Bagaman Island woodcarver, visited us at Hoba Bay, we put in an order for a traditional sailing canoe, mini size. He came to see us in the Bagaman Island anchorage and we were very pleased with his work. We also purchased a beautiful clam shaped bowl of rosewood, inlaid with mother of pearl - very nice work. If you have the time it's worth putting in an order for what you want.

In Bagaman we also met Esterley, a delightful, enthusiastic woman, 25 years old, single, captain of the netball team and busily raising money for netball and to send her brother to high school; Gula, the local chief; Justina, soon to be a grade 8 graduate and on the lookout for a pair of shoes for graduation; and a few of the rally yachts. This is a good anchorage, again with some okay snorkelling on the fringing reef

**Anui – September 2011:** Then it was the Louisiades, starting with Bagaman. More trading, more canoes; a constant stream of requests and negotiations. We picked up some lovely ebony carvings and of course the Bagie Queen was in her element.

Nevertheless, the region is beautiful and we loved it. From Bagaman we had a blissfully quiet week or so in anchorages too far away from a village to allow so many canoes to come by. We visited some villages to deliver gifts and show respect to the families whose waters we were staying in. If we'd caught any fish, we offered these too and these were happily whisked away.

Some of these communities were desperately isolated and did not even have the means to collect water. They were reliant on the lagoon for fish and their gardens for taro, cassava and coconuts – any other items came to them by luck or chance. Health issues are not attended to; there are no medical services, women die in childbirth and children can easily become undernourished. We handed out sea-ulcer treatment – packs of antiseptic, alcohol wipes and clean bandages – but it is very little. Children learn to live on coconuts from infancy. As the need became more evident, the boat became lighter and lighter – we went through every cupboard for things that we could do without – clothes, plastic containers, sheets, towels, hats, ropes, tarps, buckets.

### **3.1.4 Chibudi Pass**

**Alba – July 2015:** We entered the Louisiades from Vanuatu. The last fifteen miles to the reef passage seemed to take forever. The skies were overcast and very gloomy, with showers in the distance. The wind was 20-25 knots from the south, so we were beating hard into the wind, heeled over at 30 degrees. I was worried about the light conditions, the strong winds and what sort of current and wave conditions we would have at the pass.

We arrived at 0830, by which time the sun had risen higher in the sky and the clouds were starting to break up. High tide was at 0615 (UTC+10), so we went through Chubudi Pass two hours after high tide and encountered a 4 knot current against us. Fortunately, the wind was with the tide, so we didn't get any big standing waves.

We never saw anything less than 20 metres depth and the pass is 300 metres wide. (Our waypoints were:

11°05.181S 153°02.231E

11°05.653S 153°02.068E

11°06.021S 153°01.843E

11°06.529S 153°00.731E

From there we bashed against the current another 3 hours to anchor at Pananumara.

### **3.1.5 *Pana Tinani***

**Verite – July 2018:** Hati Lawi Harbour, Pana Tinani Island, Louisiades, PNG. Traded today with Stanley from the local village for a Samukor necklace also called “bagge” which is a handcrafted shell necklace used in the “bride price” ceremony. Considered a valuable item in the village community.

We visited the Stanley’s village and family, albeit briefly as the tide was going out and if too long we would have had drag the dinghy a long way over coral.

Stanley left our boat to go fishing. He demonstrated how to use a rock and palm frond with slip knot as a sinker combined with hook and a chicken feather lure. Seems work great for them particularly for golden travally.

Very beautiful here in the big bay surrounded by high hills covered in jungle - and so peaceful. Many birds and lots of fish and sting rays. No plastic.

### **3.1.6 *Pananumara / Panaumala***

**Obiwan – Oct 2022:** Anchorage 11° 08.975'S 152° 47.051'E

At first we anchored at 11° 9.255S 152° 46.685E

On shore only a couple of huts, very primitive people but also very welcoming.

They explained us that the main village is on the north east of the island so we moved there with the boat and anchored at **11° 08,975'S 152° 47,051'E**

The anchorage was coral but the holding was good.

The village is quite large, with many huts. People here make Bagie (shell money). They were very welcoming, and the village is nice. We managed to trade a Bagie for a diving mask, a tshirt, some rice and sugar.

A nice lady also gifted me with a pandano leaf nice bag.

Again we had a lot of canoes coming to our boat for trading fruits and veggie, they asked for fishing lines, clothes, and diving mask.

**Alba – July 2015:** After coming in the Chibudi Pass, we fought adverse current on our way to Pananaumara. We anchored in 6 metres.

The sea bed has lots of coral heads, so I snorkelled down to check the anchor, then put a fender on the chain at 15m with 30 metres out, which seemed to be holding the chain above the seabed. This is a lovely looking anchorage with a white sand beach, blue water and swaying coconut palms. It’s well protected from the south 20-25 knot winds that are howling at the moment.

**Songlines – September 2011:** Hoba Bay at 11 09.209'S:152 46.649'E

Blue Lagoon looked beautiful as we sailed past but the winds continue so it was on to the calmer waters provided by Hoba Bay, Pana Numara. We anchored in about 18m over sand. Each island is defined by its geography in many ways - from the timber available to build canoes or carve for implements, to the food that can be grown in the soil or fish that thrive on their reefs. Canoes here, are without outriggers and paddled from the stern with kayak style paddles. Speed seems to be more important. We did however see some dual purpose canoes with the stern paddling position and an outrigger platform built at the front of the boat.

We're told they're both fast and can carry some gear. The snorkeling around the edges of the bay was reasonable and we've enjoyed tea on the back deck with many locals who've come to trade.

Later in September: After two dreary, rainy days the sun shone brilliantly and I was able to snorkel the point on the western side of Hoba Bay - there are many beautiful red coral fans but lots of current, lots of fish and many reef sharks which I found a little unnerving. It's generally a good snorkel but you need to get the tides right. We still had several visitors coming to trade in the rain and also several other yachts waiting out the weather so as usual it ended up being quite social.

### **3.1.7 Duchateau Islands / Deboyne Islands (Panapompom)**

Unknown Source ~ 2013: Rally stop. Est 9/17-20

**Obiwan – Oct 2022 – Niviani Island:** Anchorage **10° 47.268'S 152° 23.244'E** Good anchorage. With a very nice and tidy village.

The wreck of the WWII plane has been sunk in the sand and is no longer visible.

Everybody in the village was very kind. A lady made me a very nice and elegant pandano leaf bag. The chief asked us to write on the computer a document he needed and we also printed out 2 copies for him.

As we were leaving he came to our boat with a big shell with a hole in it to blow in. It makes a nice horn sounds. It was his present for us to thank you.

**Tenaya – 2015:** Keen to learn more about the Sailing canoes (sailaus in the local Misima language), built by master craftsmen on Panaeti and Panapompom, we sail 31 miles to Panapompom in slight seas and southeasterly winds of 11–17 knots.

Bommies (coral heads) are clearly visible 9m below as we approach the anchoring waypoint between Nivani and Panapompom, but then a man in a dugout canoe intercepts us and guides us to a spot he insists will protect us from the prevailing southeast winds.

Once the anchor is set, Martin comes aboard to share banana bread and stories. People in PNG love to tell stories!

Milia instilled the idea of locals respecting visitors and their boats. His rules – do not steal things, offer to trade if you want something, do not ask for too much, do not let your canoe touch the sailboats, be polite.

One of his sons, Ishmael, is the new Ward Councillor. He is kind, soft-spoken and eager to liaise with the government to help the people of Panapompom. Julie Toby is the head teacher

at the elementary school – she wishes there was enough money for each child to have a simple desk to keep their notebooks off the dirt floor.

“Are there crocodiles here?” Jim asks Tobby, Milia’s son and Julie’s father. “No, the boys shoot them.” If there were crocs they would be in the river that must be crossed to reach the school, so when Roseanne’s dog bounds into the water and emerges on the other side unscathed, I am pleased. It’s hard to believe that six- to ten-year-old children make this hour-long trek through the forest twice each day.

As we near the three school buildings built of bush material, we hear excited voices repeating, “Dim Dim!” That’s what white people are called. Dozens of kids scurry about as Julie gives us a tour. We are impressed by her dedication and competence, and to see phonics written on one large blackboard and arithmetic on another. Education is important on Panapompom, and the kids are already learning English.

Money, called ‘kina’, is hard to come by. In the past people produced copra, but now the prices are very low. Men collected *bêche-de-mer* (sea cucumbers), but that is banned for the foreseeable future to counteract over-harvesting.

Because they need kina to pay school fees, parents sell intricately carved wooden spears, detailed model sailaus, lovely baskets and treasures from the sea to the few boats that pass through.

**Totem – November 2012:** Yams and coconut are diet staples where we have been cruising in southeast Papua New Guinea. We have traded for many, but my first attempts at preparing them weren’t very interesting. One of the first women I met on Panapompom Island, Wendy, came on board to help me work out the secrets one afternoon.

The first step is to peel the rough skin from the yams. Before we began paring, she pointed out that the trader who brought these to me was giving away her seed yams. This time of year (September/October) is planting season, so she cut off the top couple of inches from each yam and reserved them to be replanted. Our lesson diverged into a long tangent on growing yams: the many varieties, how gardens are owned, and who works in them.

Wendy used a paring knife she’d brought in her bag. Actually, she’d probably love to have a proper paring knife. Like a lot of knives we’ve seen, this was just a broken blade which had long since been parted from its handle, but served the purpose.

Next, yams were cut into similarly sized pieces (about 1 x 2 inch chunks) and put in a pot, to which about an inch of water was added. She said we should put some salt in. I asked if she used seawater, since anytime we can use a little seawater helps conserve our fresh water supply. “Of course!” was the reply- and felt a little like an idiot. Her potable water is collected from rain during the wet season, so her method conserves fresh as much as possible: it’s a precious resource. Of course. The pot was put on to simmer.

What makes these yams really good is fresh coconut milk. This is probably where my yams prepared on board fell short compared to what we tasted on shore. Wendy laughed at my cleaver and suggested I needed a “proper” bush knife to crack them. She made quick work of getting a mature coconut cracked, and the meat cut out in chunks, but it was minutes instead of seconds with the right tools. Getting meat out of a coconut is a lot harder than it sounds. I’m already fascinated with how everyone from about the age of two seems to carry these big

machetes around, and have another reason now to seek out a bush knife. Meanwhile, I'm collecting photographic evidence of PNG toddlers as knife experts.

Next the coconut meat is grated. Once again, we are lacking island-style tools. Most homes have a coconut scraper that looks a little like a footstool, with a wicked looking piece of metal off the end. Half of a coconut is inverted over the metal bit, and with some vigorous rubbing the meat inside is quickly turned into a pile of fine shreds. Our grater didn't work as efficiently or uniformly, but Siobhan helped us to get the job done.

Next, the grated coconut meat is put into a colander or strainer over the yams. All Wendy really does is squeeze it by the handful to eke out a few tablespoons of rich milk, but a little bit of water helps. She didn't do much more than shake a wet hand over the top of the pile to get enough.

I couldn't resist breaking out a can of coconut milk, and showing her how we would normally acquire the creamy liquid. The very idea is anathema: we did a taste test, and of course, there's no comparison to the fresh stuff. In the context of her home, though, Wendy was fascinated. Coconuts litter the ground, but canned goods are only acquired at relatively great expense and by traveling to another island. It embarrassed me, to be honest, and I quickly regretted grabbing the can from a pantry locker- but she just laughed it off.

The yams were tested periodically with a fork, and were cooked through in about 20 minutes. Scooped out onto a plate, we snacked on them as soon as they were cool enough to touch. Yams are cooked and eaten throughout the day. Children poking their heads out see the "dim dim" clutch them, and like children everywhere, don't find a mouthful of fluffy yam to be remotely an obstacle for talking.

We've eaten yams like these on almost every stop so far in PNG. Even if I weren't already a little obsessed with what we eat, it's hard not to be drawn to understand these mainstays of a subsistence lifestyle. The lessons I learned along the way from my afternoon with Wendy underscore how food offers windows into a culture.

Wendy and I had also talked about how to find new ways to engage with cruisers to her home of Panapompom island. She and her neighbors are interested in trading, and curious to meet people who come to visit. But visiting boats don't always want or need what islanders have to sell. Bringing them a service to trade, like a cooking lesson, is a different way of thinking. It gets cruisers and islanders into the same space and talking together: anything that can elevate the conversation from how many papayas for a t-shirt has got to be good! Even if the lessons are just be about cooking yams, at the absolute minimum it's almost impossible not to make a friend, and learn more about the beautiful and friendly place we're visiting.

**Anui – October 2011:** We ended our Louisiade exploration in the Duchateau Islands, where we saw not a soul. We had a solid week's work on the boat to get ready for our return to Australia – our quarantine requirements are the most stringent in the world. We emptied and cleaned every drawer, cupboard and locker. We gave away all of our food that would be refused entry.

**Songlines – September 2011: 10 47.287'S:152 23.264'E, Nivani Island, Deboyne Group**

Monday we fled the flies of Ltamarina Island and headed for Panapompom in the Deboyne Group, the home of our mariner friends of yesterday. It was a long day. We left by 6am and got

in at about 3pm, and covered over sixty miles. The wind was firm...., 15 to 20 knots all day, and for fun we ran some big tacking legs; two hours on port, then across to starboard. It's great to have the mainsail back working again.

Half way across, the AIS (automatic identification system) navigation system started to pinpoint lots of shipping heading north and south along a line defined on the chartplotter, Songline's electronic chart. There were five or so ships depicted within twenty miles on either side of our route, each cutting along the dotted electronic line.

This marine artery of Australian trade threads down past Manus Island, runs between the mainland of Papua New Guinea and the island of New Britain, past the Trobriand Islands, through the Louisiade Archipelago and out into the Coral Sea. At one point, at the Jomard Entrance, about fifteen miles from where we are now, the channel is just three miles wide. Day and night these massive steel monsters swan past; I would estimate twenty to thirty a day - right past the noses of these villagers for whom a packet of sugar is a rare treat.

After our encounter with all of that, we eventually entered the lagoon of the Deboyne Group, heading for a recommended anchorage behind Nivani Island, adjacent to Panapompom. Behind the reef in the lagoon the seas were slight, the wind stayed at fifteen plus knots with lots of south in it, and so we scooted the six miles on a glorious beam reach at nine to ten knots.

The anchorage at Nivani Island in the Deboynes was reasonable in 6m sand, but with 20+knots across the lagoon there was a swell sweeping around the island particularly at high tide and gusts in the otherwise quiet. Other yachts have been few and far between with only two viewed on the horizon since our arrival in PNG but today we met up with Moana from Berlin, with her Skipper, Jens and crew, Daria. It was excellent to catch up on some cruising information, as this is Jens second trip to PNG after wintering his boat in Australia.

Daria and Jens snorkelled the Zero WW2 plane wreck with us, off the north western tip of the island in about 2-3m sand. The Zero was reported as being forced to ditch when the Shoho, a Japanese aircraft carrier sank off Misama. The wreck of the Zero is upright and fairly intact with a lionfish making its home in the cockpit and several anemones and clownfish in the seat. I prefer a calm anchorage so by midday we followed a cruiser-aid built ketch out of the lagoon, through the Nivani passage seeking calmer waters at Panasia Island.

**Lousiades.net – Nivani Island:** Nivani is an uninhabited island next to Panapompom. You could almost walk between the two at low tide. It provides a delightful anchorage between the two islands.

On the beach facing the anchorage you will find some ruins. They are hard to identify now but the leftover structures used to belong to a copra plantation on the island.

Snorkelling - No visit to Nivani is complete without snorkelling on the wreck of the Japanese Zero fighter plane. The wreck lies upright and intact (wings buried) in about 2.5m of water in the anchorage about 50m out from the beach. A recon trip in the dinghy should be enough to locate it - start from the point of the beach closest to Panapompom, and work your way across the bay.

**Maranatha – Sep 2006 – Navani Island:** This anchorage is popular as there is a Japanese Zero in about two metres of water that can be snorkelled over. The anchorage tends to jiggle a bit in sustained south east winds. A better anchorage is on the north side of Pana Pom Pom Island.

Maranatha – Waypoints Alotau (in Milne Bay) to Pan Pom Pom - 2011

Course	Leg True	Dist	Total Dist	Lat / Long
Alotau anchorage				10°18.5827 S 150°27.0351 E
Wpt 1	166 °	0.7 Nm	0.7 Nm	10°19.2279 S 150°27.2031 E
Lihitabu Point	111 °	8.3 Nm	8.9 Nm	10°22.1679 S 150°35.0674 E
Wpt 3	101 °	36.8 Nm	45.8 Nm	10°29.0484 S 151°11.8734 E
Wpt 4	105 °	24.2 Nm	70.0 Nm	10°35.1815 S 151°35.6703 E
W Passage	107 °	42.8 Nm	112.8 Nm	10°48.0341 S 152°17.2662 E
PanaPomPom	073 °	5.4 Nm	118.2 Nm	10°46.4549 S 152°22.4970 E

Maranatha – June 2007 - Pana Pom Pom (N Coast):

Anchorage Waypoint: 10° 46.144S 152° 22.869E

This is a very still anchorage in good holding sand. It is a short dinghy ride around to the south side to Nivani Island. If coming from Alotau it is possible to go through West Passage and anchor at this anchorage safely at night.

### 3.1.8 Brooker Island / Utian

**Obiwan – Sep 2022:** Anchorage 11°02.927'S 152°26.441'E Sand, good holding.

Again, we entered the lagoon with the help of satellite images and again Navionics on ipad was good too.

The village onshore is quite large, there is the school and 4 public “toilets” on the two edges of the beach. People onshore were very welcoming and friendly. They produce clay pots here, and they were happy to show us the procedure, from collecting the clay to cook the pottery on the fire.

We visited the school, brought some goods like pens, pencils, notebooks. We also brought a ball for the school and Giovanni played soccer with all the children. We had many canoes coming asking for lollies, fishing gear, clothes

**Totem – Oct 2012:** When sailed from Panasia to Brooker Island, we gave a ride to Ronnie- one of the local guys who had gone diving for crayfish for us the night before. He wanted to go back for a feast with his soccer team to celebrate the end of their season. We were happy to offer a lift and his local knowledge came in very handy for navigating through the reef into Brooker’s lagoon.

As we turned coastwise along the island to the main anchorage, the hoots and calls from the hillside were our first cue that things would be different here. People working in steep gardens facing the water yelled and waved, and those walking along the rocky shoreline back to the village broke into a trot to keep pace.

The anchor as barely down before the first boats arrived in our unofficial greeting committee. Almost all were piloted by children, and few would meet even the loosest definition of a sound



vessel. Pieces of foam, half of a barrel, a chunk of wood- anything that offered floatation and might be aided with a paddle. "Dim dim! Dim dim!" they call out, hailing us with the local term for a foreigner.

Once it was clarified that we didn't have candy and balloons to give them (things the rally yachts are strongly encouraged to bring- but candy, really? and balloons- let's kill some turtles, shall we? UGH), they were just plain curious about us and happy to play with our kids. These children were unfailingly polite: and nobody came on board without asking, and they got very strict with each other if one child perceived another was getting out of line. At one point we had about two dozen children age 10 and under (the older primary kids attend school on another island) on Totem, and more in the water.

I was busy down below making lunch for us and for Ronnie, and was headed for the toilet when I realized there were many eyes peering through the ports down below...the head included. Whew- just in time! It seems funny, but what we have here is just wildly different. Pressurized water that comes out of a tap, shelves and shelves of books, various electronics and screens (there's no power, much less a computer, on the island of 600+ residents).

They sit next to me in the cockpit and rub my skin- maybe that white stuff comes off? Are those freckles and spots permanent? We put on sunscreen, and dab a little on them to the eruption of peals of laughter and some very funny lotion smearing (zinc doesn't blend in as well on them).

Walking through the village later, children were our entourage. School is over at midday and based on the throng, we're the biggest entertainment around. They laugh and help with my attempts at Misima dialect, teaching me words for things they can share- flower, canoe, baby. Niall is charmed by the little ones who vie to hold his hand. Our girls are shy to start, but soon doing shadow puppet hand games. The boldest among them become our junior handlers, asking one question after another to try and ascertain what they can offer to us for trade. Do we want tomatoes? papayas? sweet potatoes? bananas? Do we have rice? flour? sugar? soap? laundry powder? The kids always seem to be smiling, and if you catch their eye, break out in blinding grins.

We have become the entertainment, but it's fun for everyone.

**Songlines – October 2011 - Diving:** From our anchorage inside the lagoon we took the tender over the reef to the northern drop off and had two gorgeous **drift dives** along the wall. Perfect weather! Perfect diving! There were turtles, sharks, stingrays, wrasse, coral, and lots of small fish. I just never want to get out of the water on days like this.

Our visitors included some more affluent kids home from the mainland for holidays and requesting their mobile phones be charged; and also Paul, 64 years old and an ex PNG Fisheries employee. Paul had trained in Melbourne, Nelson, NZ and Gatton, Queensland during his career but was now back in the village though his kids were pursuing careers on the mainland.

Paul pointed out the remains of many abandoned aid projects and businesses along the foreshore. He believes the traditional village culture has to change for islanders to be able to run successful businesses. The obligation to his extended family so often strips any hopeful entrepreneur of working capital: in these societies obligation to family transcends all else. Relatives with needs - school fees are a big one - expect access to accumulated money, and they don't understand or care about the distinction between working capital and profit. So

businesses constantly fail and aid projects die once the establishment capital is consumed and management is left in the hands of locals. It is instructive that many of the successful local entrepreneurs are from other provinces, removed from the demands of their "wantoks" for handouts. On the other hand it is the reliance on a day to day basis of other family members that makes their contemporary lives easier, and so to deny that family reciprocity would be even more damaging. We were sad to leave the next day and overnighted at Nivani Island as we returned west.

### **Songlines – September 2011: Brooker or Utian Island 11 002.913'S:152 26.771'E,**

At first glance the approach to Brooker (Utian) Island looks daunting. There is a pass in the reef off the eastern arm of East Brooker Passage, created when the PNG Navy blew an access hole through the reef back in 1976. We had the advantage of having Mackenzie on board, but once there, the pass is obvious. There is at least 4m all the way through the pass though there is still a number of bommies below that depth. Once through the pass, there is at least 10m all the way to the two anchorages on the northern side of the island - either in the bay near the village or the next bay with only a scattering of houses. We anchored in 6m sand and enjoyed the calm water for a couple of days. There is quite a large village on Brooker, complete with a permanent material school, church and another building styled as a library. The people were pleasant, and happy to chat. In recent years there has been a resurrection of clay pot making because of the lack of money to buy aluminum pots.

Brooker Island is one place with the right clay and the women are kept busy making the pots by hand and firing them over palm frond fires. They are a popular alternative to metal cooking ware, and sell readily in the markets on various nearby islands.

Another indication of the difficulties in assisting development is the library given to the Brooker Islanders by a shipping company in appreciation for their efforts to assist a ship, which was grounded on a nearby reef in 2005. Few people use the library as few people can read, and after a hard day in the garden or fishing, no one has a light to read with at night. Solar power has penetrated very few islands here.

Coleman and hurricane lamps exist, but the cost of kerosene is prohibitive; battery driven lights exist also, though rarely are there batteries to match.

We enjoyed visiting the school and we were able to donate wall charts, books, pens and chalk. The teachers were pleased to talk with us - they do a fantastic job with the few resources they have available and the huge classes needing their attention.

The PNG Government has promised school fees will be abolished next year so they can expect many more children to attend school - how will they manage? Already this school has 60 children crammed into two small rooms with projections for 76 next year and continuing growth. Visitors to the boat continued, usually in the late afternoon after school and work in the gardens was complete, with trades for crayfish and school kids singing in exchange for cookies. I was sad to leave this lovely anchorage with the reef still to explore.

Brooker Island is not as pretty as some, but has a number of other attractions - a very safe and protected anchorage, and a population who could provide a range of cultural activities to amuse visitors - sailing canoe trips, traditional clay pot making, traditional dancing, great fishing, great dive and snorkeling sites, and so on. When we got to Brooker, we inspected a site for a "yacht

club"...a waterfront building site with good dinghy access close to the anchorage, but removed from the main village, and sheltered by several enormous fig trees.

**Maranatha – Oct 2011:** Entry channel to the lagoon waypoints:

Waypoint 1: 11° 03.232S 152° 25.783E

Waypoint 2: 11° 03.160S 152° 25.894E

Waypoint 3: 11° 02.989S 152° 25.967E

Waypoint 4: 11° 02.860S 152° 26.220E

Waypoint 5: 11° 02.939S 152° 26.396E

Anchorage: 11° 02.995S 152° 26.441E

A very good anchorage with sand bottom. Entrance channel can be a bit tricky.

### **3.1.9 Panasia Island**

Rally stop, 9/21-22. Limestone caves!

**Obiwan – Sep 2022:** Anchorage 11° 07.900'S 152° 19.988'E 6m sand and coral

We entered from Cormorant Channel and after about 3 miles we turned right and entered in the lagoon. Thanks to satellite images we easily found the pass. Also Navionics on ipad was quite accurate.

On the little beach there is the house of John and Gwen, a kind elderly couple. When we was there they just came with their sailing canoe from Utian Island with all their grandchildren, like 8 smiling kids.

The village is on the other side of the island and is an easy ride with dinghy but not so interesting.

**2XS – September 2016:** 11-07.938 S / 152-19.983E in 6.5m

This is such a spectacular island – towering limestone cliffs with many folds and fissures, brave little trees growing from unlikely places. Sparkling turquoise water – the whole deal.

**Alba – July 2015:** Anchorage Position: 11°07.84'S 152°20.12'E.

We were up fairly early to sail from Pananumara to Panasia, where we'll stay until we leave for Port Moresby - we'd rather stay in one place for a few days and get to know the locals rather than flitting about from anchorage to anchorage.

We had a bouncy beam reach in 25 knot winds, but it was only 25 miles and we had a fast passage arriving in four hours. The entrance to the anchorage through the fringing reef was a little scary when approaching, but with good light there was no problem in seeing the deeper water and skirting around the shallower isolated reefs.

(Our waypoints were: 11°07.425S 152°20.611E, 11°07.537S 152°20.332E, 11°07.720S 152°20.147E, and we anchored at: 11°07.851S 152°20.111E)

The Panasia anchorage is deep and littered with coral heads, but we eventually found a place in 12 metres of water. I managed to hit a sandy patch with the anchor and then put two sets of

fenders on the chain to lift it off the seabed. The anchorage is stunning, with blue water and steep cliffs towering above us - one of the top ten anchorages of our voyage so far.

I went snorkelling to check the anchor and then went to look at the reef by the shore. The reef was covered by a fine layer of sand and the water was a little murky, but I snapped some pictures of a couple of fish that I haven't seen before - the 1 foot tall, Juvenile Longfin Spadefish were interesting.

While I was out, a guy called Frank and his son Michael came paddling up on an old surf kayak. By the time that I'd got back to the boat, they were on-board eating biscuits and chatting with Glenys. Frank lives on a neighbouring island called Small Panasia, which is a couple of miles away and has a small village - he'd brought a few vegetables to trade with us.

The islanders here are very used to trading for things. They are very isolated and trading is a way of obtaining hard-to-get items. Frank brought three lots of vegetables - one from himself, and the others from two ladies. He had papaya, plus some kind of yam and he also had a Bush Fowl egg, which is twice the size of an ordinary hen's egg, so we took that as well. We ended up agreeing to a bag of sugar, some sewing needles and soap for the ladies and for Frank we gave some Paracetamol, sandals and some clothes for his son. He says that he's going to get four lobster for us tomorrow and would like some fishing line and hooks in return.

There was a nice sunset over the island and we'd just settled down for a quiet night, when a sailing canoe came into the anchorage and came alongside. The boat belongs to John who has a house on the beach near the anchorage, but at the moment, he's staying over at Small Panasia and helping to catch a load of fish that they're sending to Misima tomorrow.

We dinghied out to Nasakoli Island, which is about 1½ miles across the lagoon. It's a small deserted island with a beautiful white sand beach, which is good for shelling. When we arrived we found Frank sitting on the shore - he'd been out on the reef looking for lobster for us and had come to the island for a rest. We told him that John had delivered four lobster last night and we only needed two lobster from him, which he accepted with grace. He then walked around the beach with us, helping Glenys to look for shells.

Just after we got back to the boat, Frank paddled up with two lobsters for us, plus a couple of Nautilus shells - Glenys has been hankering after one of these for a year now, but refused to buy one from a tourist shop. He also brought us some more papaya and a yam.

I've edited a lot of the trading-with-the-locals chatter out. Read the full report here:

<http://www.thehowarths.net/alba-chronicles/2015-nz-to-thailand/94-july-2015-vanuatu-to-indonesia>

From Panasia, Alba sailed directly to Port Moresby.

**Totem – Oct 2012:** We extended our tiptoe into Papua New Guinea by sailing to Panasia island at the western end of the Louisiades. We were wary of crossing Jomard Entrance after the seas we experienced last week, but had no problem, and picked up three very nice pelagic fish on handlines for our trouble.

Panasia is where the people from neighboring Utian island keep the gardens that feed their families. Sweet potatoes, ibecca (a bitter green), bananas, watermelon and more for themselves; corn and cherry tomatoes are grown to trade with the yachties who stop in.

Here we begin to experience the rich Louisiades trading culture. Islands actively trade together, and visiting boats are of interest for the goods they bring from outside. Where islands specialize based on their available resources- clay pots made on Utian, canoes from the wood on Panaeti, lime for betel on Sabra, shells for bagi (for currency and ritual trade) on Nimoa and Rossel- cruisers offer staples otherwise sourced from distant trade stores for exchange.

Small villages, with a handful of families, live in homes of wood frame and coconut frond thatching. Footpaths connect one village with another. Sailing canoes traverse between islands, and here at Panasia, from one side to the other: the water route is easier to traverse than the paths through very steep limestone slopes. Unlike the rest of the coconut run we have sailed, these islands do not have a cash economy. There is no ubiquity to modern infrastructure or stores; trading goods is the primary method to satisfy needs for anything that cannot be grown or made from what is immediately at hand.

When we arrive, we make a gift of fish to the family on shore. We're guests in their waters, and a "one for us, one for them" standard is used. Even though few families live here on Panasia, we have a stream of dugout canoes stopping by Totem. Seeing our sail as we progressed closer, they come in outriggers not just from the adjacent shore but around from the opposite side of the island, and an adjacent island where gardens are kept. Visitors bring what they have to offer: coconuts, papaya, sweet potatoes, eggs, cherry tomatoes, lobster. We're asked for clothing (especially for children), rice, sugar, or batteries to power the lanterns and radios at home.

We're learning from boats who have spent years here how this trading has changed as the number of visiting boats has increased. There is more of an expectation that cruisers will give without reciprocation from islanders- a break from their mutual trade tradition, "pem penpewa". It's easy to see how this happens. You may already have traded for more bananas than you can eat, but someone is offering more and they clearly seem to need the t-shirt being requested, why not?

Although we might think we're a little shabby, our boat and basic gear represent immense wealth to an islander- from their point of view, why not ask for something you need? Although trading is a way of life, so is "hol hol", the obligation between relatives to give what you have if it's requested of you (not surprisingly, most trade stores are not run by locals, but by Chinese or other non-local ethnicities who do not have to submit to this).

One enterprising man comes with a prepared list of desired items. He seems a little surprised when we ask what he has for us in return, but laughs and jumps into trading mode when we use the Misima dialect terms for his tradition- "u pem, ya pewa" (you give, I give).

We have our trading training wheels on, but are getting into the rhythm. One trade at a time, we are finding out how to balance being fair with being generous, and be respectful guests in this beautiful place.

<http://www.sailingtotem.com/2012/10/panasia-island-trading-101-in-our.html>

**Songlines - September 2011:** 11 07.888'S:152 19.977'E, Panasia Island, Calvados Chain,

Panasia Island was our next stop. It is yet another idyllic anchorage, this time in the Calvados chain. We entered the Panasia Island lagoon via a northern pass. Though fairly narrow, there was at least 5m depth through the pass and it was good to get into the calm lagoon waters after

the steep swell in the Cormorant Channel with several knots of tide against 25knots of wind. Very bumpy! Good light is required as there are several bommies throughout the lagoon. We found the charts out by 100+m also as they are in many places here. Panasia Island features huge limestone cliffs around the anchorage making for a spectacular view and also an interesting expedition to see the limestone caves. Few people live in the lagoon and John, who lives on the pristine beach opposite the anchorage was away, so we appreciated a visit from MacKenzie Noel who lives with his wife, Jane and three children on Little Panasia Island. MacKenzie was educated at boarding school in Alotau to Year 12, though missed out on university due to lack of funds. He returned to his village and village life.

MacKenize and his young companions for the day gave us a tour of the limestone caves on the southern side of Panasia. We dinghied around the island and walked along a beautiful white sand beach to reach the part time village where many islanders have their gardens, though they live on other islands. Their usual mode of transport is sailing canoe and quite a few came and went during our stay apparently revelling in the 20-25knot conditions. At least it beats paddling the canoe when the wind drops.

### **3.1.10 Snake Passage**

**Maranatha** - See also Rambuso Creek and Araidia Village as possible anchorages after running Snake Passage and before running the Rossel Lagoon waypoints.

Waypoints for the western entrance to Snake Passage are –

Gold rush channel

11° 22.279 S, 153° 19.477 E

Snake Passage W.P. 1

11° 22.673 S, 153° 20.155 E (actual passage entrance)

Snake Passage W.P. 2

11° 22.586 S, 153° 20.559 E

Snake Passage W.P. 3

11° 22.678 S, 153° 20.874 E

By this stage you are well into the passage and can eyeball it from here.

Snake Passage eastern entrance W.P. (corrected)

11° 20.890 S; 153° 22.817 E.”

“The eastern approach way point is:

11° 21.624 S; 153° 26.323 E. This clears a bump in the reef on the south side of Yeina Island.”

### **3.1.11 Sudest Island (Tugala/Talgula Island)**

**Maranatha – Aug 2012 – Duwa (Damaga Bay):**

Anchorage Waypoint: 11° 37.315S 153° 33.148E

Western Approach Waypoint: 11° 37.413S 153° 32.337E

Eastern Approach Waypoint: 11° 37.521S 153° 32.452E

This anchorage is the closest to the school. It is good holding mud in about four metres. The two approach waypoints clear a large reef at the entrance to the bay. The western one if coming from the west and the eastern one if coming through the outer reef entrance.

**Maranatha – August 2012 - Kalumatama (Damaga Bay):**

Anchorage Waypoint: 11° 37.523S 153° 32.713E

This anchorage in 13-15 metres is useful as a stop-over but it is some distance from the villages. Large vessels, including at least one cruise liner, sometimes anchor here. The two approach waypoints clear a large reef at the entrance to the bay. The western one if coming from the west and the eastern one if coming through the outer reef entrance.

**Maranatha – Rehuwo (Damaga Bay) Anchorage: 11° 37.100S 153° 32.467E**

A reasonable anchorage even in strong ESE to East winds. Don't go any closer to the shore as there are bommies. Good holding mud in about four metres. The two approach waypoints clear either side of a large reef depending on whether arrival is from the west or from the main entrance through the outer reef.

**Maranatha – Aug 2007 – Griffin Point: Anchorage Waypoint: 11° 23.852S 153° 20.581E**

A good anchorage in good holding mud in about ten metres of water.

**Maranatha – Aug 2009 – Jelewaga:**

Anchorage 1 Waypoint: 11° 26.516S 153° 14.137E 8 metres sand bottom (shoals quickly!)

Approach Waypoint: 11° 26.972S 153° 12.797E

Anchorage 2 Waypoint: 11° 27.785S 153° 15.514E 7 metres sand bottom (shoals quickly)

Approach Waypoint No 1: 11° 28.046S 153° 13.976E

Approach Waypoint No 2: 11° 27.925S 153° 15.234E

Neither of these anchorages have good visibility. Access to No1 is fairly straight forward and is the better anchorage for SE and ESE winds. Access to No 2 is difficult due to dirty water and bombies. Great care is needed. Neither anchorage is suitable for strong south winds.

**Maranatha – Aug 2012 – Ligi Ligi Bay**

Anchorage Waypoint: 11° 33.903S 153° 27.480E

Approach Waypoint No 1: 11° 36.338S 153° 24.574E

Approach Waypoint No 2: 11° 34.862S 153° 26.309E

This is a quiet bay with no-one living there. The anchorage is good holding mud in about four metres. There are other anchorages in this bay but as it was raining the day we visited it we didn't check them out.

**Maranatha – July 2007 - Muhua Bay:**

Anchorage Waypoint: 11° 22.419S 153° 18.096E

Approach Waypoint: 11° 21.722S 153° 18.252E

Good holding in mud. This is the last anchorage before Snake Passage heading east.

Beware of the reef east of the approach waypoint when coming from Snake Passage.

**Maranatha – Aug 2008 - Rambusco Creek:** Anchorage: 11° 28.980S 153° 33.287E

Rambu Reef Passage: 11° 28.349S 153° 33.020E

A very quiet and calm anchorage in good holding mud. On arrival at the reef passage waypoint, eyeball through the passage aiming for a house on the far shore. Keep about thirty meters from that shore to pass some shoal ground on the port side and proceed to the anchorage.

This is a good anchorage to overnight after transiting Snake Passage on route to Rossel Island.

### **3.1.12 Rossel Island**

Rossel Island is the eastern-most island of the Louisiades. It gets the least government attention, and also relatively few visits from yachts. It was badly hit by Cyclone Ita in April. The PNG government allocated two new boats to the island, one for the northern areas and the other for the south. Rossel now has PNG Govt representation, the Honorable Titus Philimon, who was visiting as part of the launch festivities. Torrential rain and wind did not dampen the celebration.

**2XS – September 2016:** During our last few days in the Louisiades we spent time at beautiful isolated Rossell Island. The islanders were desperate to trade and brought us many vegetables, which we couldn't really accept because we knew we would have to chuck them all into the sea before entering Australia waters. (And oh what fun Michael and I had, heaving large yams and strange earthy veggies off the back of the boat, imagining how thrilled the fishies down below would be as they found new taste sensations.) So they brought us baskets...they paddled out to 2XS wearing these baskets on their heads and we ended up with about ten.

**Maranatha – Wol Passage:** Wol Passage is a very tricky passage on the southern side of Tryon Bay between Tryon Bay and Jobe. There are 46 waypoints between the northern entrance to the passage and the exit to the ocean west of Gwa Passage so I won't list them. Suffice to say it is not recommended without a RELIABLE local on board. The northern entrance has 2.5 metres with a tide of 0.8 metres at Cape Deliverance. For the first 100 metres it is only about 10-15 metres wide. This section was cleared by the PNG navy some years ago for small trading boats.

Pastor Sigi from the CRC Church at Damunu usually gets some of his congregation men to put "beacons" on the coral outcrops when he knows we want to transit the passage.

Waypoints through Rossel Lagoon for a bombie free passage are –

Rossel Lagoon outer entrance  
11° 20.601 S, 153° 37.999 E

Rossel Lagoon inner entrance (W.P.1)  
11° 20.096 S, 153° 38.514 E



Rossel Lagoon W.P. 2  
11° 18.550 S, 153° 42.767 E

Rossel Lagoon W.P. 3  
11° 18.646 S, 153 46.689° E  
(passes a bommie close on the port side)

Rossel Lagoon W.P. 4  
11° 18.700 S, 153° 51.300 E

Rossel Lagoon W.P. 5  
11° 18.940 S, 153° 54.751E  
(passes a bommie close on the port side)

Rossel Lagoon W.P. 6  
11° 19.601 S, 153° 56.196 E

Rossel Lagoon W.P. 7  
11° 20.924 S, 153° 59.349 E

Tryon Bay anchorage  
11° 21.468 S, 154° 00.616 E

This puts you in the middle of a small bay surrounded by submerged reef; room for one vessel only this section. Plenty of room for other vessels just outside this small bay.

**Maranatha – 2014 (blog post while cruising in the med):** The HF radios I installed at Misima and Rossel are working. Bruce and Dianne Bentley who used to do similar work with us over there have been keeping in contact with Misima. Dianne has organised to raise funds to send to two of the pastors we trust so they can buy food and other necessities to distribute to the more remote islands of Sudest and Rossel where the worst of the damage was. It is very important over there to make sure funds go to people who will distribute it to the really needy and not just to their own “one-tok” (family). If anyone is interested Dianne’s number is 0409693171.

**Nimrod – September 2014:** A critical issue with cruising around coral is to negotiate shallows in good light, preferably as close to mid-day as possible, so you can see the bommies, helped by polarised sunglasses and a position up on the cabin roof. We arrived near Gwa, on Rossel Island just before dawn. It seemed prudent to kill some time by sailing down to the western end of the Rossel lagoon and motor sail up through it to Tryon Bay, the main Rossel harbour. Two big Spanish mackerel, one of which we gave to Pastor Sigi. He was recommended to us by Phil Bailey, a missionary who produces one of the better blogs of the Louisiades.  
<http://yachtmaranatha.wordpress.com/> . The religious issues on Rossel Island are contentious, as you can read here.

**Maranatha – September 2008 – Buwo Bay:** Anchorage Waypoint: 11° 19.227S 154° 04.930E

A nice anchorage in Buwo Bay. There is a four meter shallow spot about 0.2 NM west of the anchorage but continue on to the waypoint for a better anchorage.

Subject to wind bullets down the mountain.

Maranatha – Aug 2011 – Pambwa #1, Rossel Island S Coast:

Anchorage Waypoint: 11° 24.017S 154° 00.572E

This is a good anchorage in good holding mud in nine metres of water. Very calm in 25 knots from the SE. A good anchorage if arriving from Australia as the entrance is easy to see and the channel to the anchorage is a wide dog-leg to port then to starboard with well defined reef either side.

Maranatha – June 2012 – Pua Bay, Rossel Island:

Anchorage Waypoint: 11° 21.350S 154° 04.797E

Approach Waypoint: 11° 20.724S 154° 04.381E

This is a quiet anchorage in Yonga Bay. Anchor in six metres in sandy mud with low coral.

Maranatha - July 2007 - Tryon Bay – Rossel Island:

Anchorage Waypoint: 11° 21.468S 154° 00.616E

A very good anchorage in four to five metres with good holding sand. The anchorage waypoint puts the vessel in the middle of a very small bay surrounded by coral which is covered at high tide. Only one vessel will fit here but there is plenty of room for more vessels just outside this spot in slightly deeper water. Subject to wind bullets coming down the mountain.

Maranatha - July 2007 - Yonga Bay, Rossel Island:

Anchorage No 1 Waypoint: 11° 21.081S 154° 06.288E

This anchorage is on coral and is difficult as the water is not clear. There are many bommies on the dinghy ride to shore, especially at low tide, and it can be difficult.

Subject to bullets coming down the mountain.

Anchorage No 2 Waypoint: 11° 21.147S 154° 05.964E

This is the preferred anchorage as it is sand with only low level scattered coral in six metres of water. The access to shore in the dinghy is better but there is a longer walk to the village.

### **3.1.13 Calvados Chain**

**Obiwan – Oct 2022 – Wanim: Anchorage 11° 14.747'S 153° 05.174'E**

As we dropped the anchor, the village on shore looked different to us. The houses were not huts but proper houses and there was a big building with coloured paintings on it. As we looked closer, we read “god bless you” and we understood it was a church.

We saw so many big sailing canoes passing by us and disappearing around the east point.

We dropped the dinghy and went to see, and we discovered the real village, just around the corner! We got a welcoming from the chief of the village and there was a bunch of nice naked children.

In the village they are specialised in making beautiful shell money. I managed to trade for one in exchange of a diving mask, drill bits, a small pliers, and sand paper .

We meet a nice young guy from Misima that came here to buy a pig. He was waiting for more than one week for a lift back to Misima and asked us if we could take him back. We were worried to embark him, can you image about the pig!?

**Maranatha – Feb 2005 – Bobo Eina:**

Anchorage Waypoint: 11° 07. 797S 152° 43.451E

Approach Waypoint: 11° 07.500 S 152° 43.400 E

This is a perfect anchorage if arriving at night as the approach is straight forward.

Once you are in ten metres the bottom is good holding sand. Move in until you are happy with the depth. This is also a good anchorage to await a weather window for leaving the Louisiades as the wind is not affected by mountains etc., and therefore gives a good indicator of the prevailing wind. It can blow 30 knots here and the water is still quite calm.

Maranatha - Hobo Bay, Pana Umarla Island – Sep 2007:

Anchorage Waypoint: 11°09.238S 152° 46.755E

A very popular anchorage in about seven metres of water. The bottom is very hard sand. Check that the anchor is set well.

**Songlines – September 2011 – Gigila Island: 11 10.06'S:152 56.119'E**

Paul and Chris Taylor with John and Sandi Kemps are Australian yachties who raised money to build an elementary school on Gigila Island. In 2010 a group of Australian yachties sailed up to Gigila and over a few weeks built a most impressive high set two classroom, iron roofed prefabricated school to replace the bush material shelter over a flea infested sand pit that was the former school house. A plastic water tank uses the school roof to provide a source of drinking water for the village. The new school is an extraordinary tribute to the people who worked and contributed to put it together. We delivered a stack of exercise books, biros, a couple of wall charts and school uniforms for students proceeding from the school to high school in Misama. Uniforms for high school students are always a difficulty, and we were happy to help. The teachers in these schools do a remarkable job. Resources are scarce, and they often go for long periods where the system neglects even to get their pay to them. We met the head teacher Ersol and Olive his colleague.

They were clearly proud of the school and close to the kids they were teaching. Exercise books, pens, pencils, scissors, erasers, sharpeners, chalk and all the usual items needed for school are needed here, and in all of the island schools. Gigila Island has several small housing enclaves scattered around its edges. The settlement where the new school was located was well kept, and quite beautiful. These people may be distressingly poor, but their homes command million dollar locations.

Our anchorage at Gigila was uncomfortable in the gusty winds so we moved around to Robinson Anchorage in the next bay for a peaceful evening.

**Maranatha – Aug 2009 – Gigila Island:**

Anchorage Waypoint: 11° 10.241S 152° 55.900E

Approach Waypoint: 11° 10.002S 152° 56.119E

This is a reasonable anchorage in about 9 – 10 metres of water but there are a few bommies which cause the anchor chain to foul at times. They are deep enough to be no problem to the keel.

Maranatha – Sept 2002 – Grass (Wanim) Island:

Anchorage Waypoint: 11° 14.771S 153° 05.753E

Western Approach Waypoint: 11° 14.494S 153° 05.281E

Northeastern Approach Waypoint: 11° 14.651S 153° 06.047E

This is a pleasant anchorage in good holding sand. The north-eastern approach waypoint is the middle of a passage between reefs that comes out from both headlands. There is plenty of water through this passage if the waypoint is held.

Maranatha – Aug 2009 – Hessessia Bay:

Anchorage Waypoint: 11° 12.321S 153° 05.630E

Approach Waypoint No 1: 11° 13.500S 153° 04.800E

Approach Waypoint No 2: 11° 12.958S 153° 04.952E

Approach Waypoint No 3: 11° 12.288S 153° 05.507E

There are a couple of reefs coming out from either side as you approach and the waypoints give clearance for them.

**Songlines – September 2011 – Wanim Island:** 11 14.756'S:153 05.713'E, Grass Island, PNG

We left the Kunawak Island anchorage early and as so many of our passages between islands are short and time not necessarily an issue, we enjoyed the sailing and tacking en route as we made our way to Wanim, or Grass Island as it's known locally. Once there we kayaked around the bay, snorkelled and enjoyed dinner with two other Aussie yachts. This is a delightful anchorage and it was great to catch up with some other cruisers.

Blog ennui hit last week though the inspiring experiences continue. We are constantly amazed at the beautiful islanders and their traditional lifestyle. Here at Wanim (Grass) Island they are part of the ancient Kula Ring or trading circle formed by the Kiriwina Islands, Woodlark, Misama, Engineers, D'Entrecasteau and Amphlett Islands. Traditionally, elaborate shell necklaces, each bearing a name, are passed clockwise around the circle and armbands anticlockwise. The ocean going sailing canoes move around the islands to trade shell jewellery, pigs, ceremonial axes, clay pots, tapa cloth and canoes with key trading partners to develop trading partnerships. The special jewellery items are not owned; the users are merely custodians of these famous pieces and so the ring continues with each named item being passed on around the ring. It can take a generation for an article to complete a cycle.

Bagi from the bagi shell (*Chama Pacifica Imbricata*), the main component of much of this jewellery is still used as currency in this area; to buy a bride or canoe or for land. We met with Gerard on Grass Island to purchase some bagi - the going rate is about Kina 500 - 1,000 per metre for good quality bagi and many of the bagi makers we've met take their bagi to Alotau or Port Moresby to sell at good mark ups.

### **3.1.14 Conflict Group**

**Obiwan – Sep 2022: Itamarina, Panaboal Island:** Anchorage **10° 44.453'S 151° 49.333'E**

Good holding on sand. Nobody onshore.

The morning after, when we were sailing along the north coast, at the south east cape we found a strong current against us and very steep and confusing swell.

**Songlines – October 2011 - Panaboal Island:** We sailed through the eastern pass nearest to Panaboal Island to enter the Conflict Group. Close to Panaboal is deep clear water all the way, though in the middle of the pass (with Ginara Island) some areas are only four metres deep.

We anchored in 23m sand behind the PNG pilot accommodation boat, Undersea Explorer ex Cairns. It's a surprisingly well protected anchorage for 20+knots of south easterly wind. Via VHF we had chatted with catamaran Muscat en route and they reported fantastic diving throughout the Conflicts particularly swimming with a whale shark off the Auriora Island drop off.

The resort at Panasesa also reports great diving at: [www.conflictsislands.com](http://www.conflictsislands.com). We motored around the lagoon checking out possibilities the next day and will return when there's less wind.

**Songline – October 2011 – Irai Island (day anchorage):** We loved the diving in the Conflict Group of Islands. The resort at Panasesa Island reports some great diving sites at: [www.conflictsislands.com](http://www.conflictsislands.com). We found it to be spectacular but needed the good weather to safely leave Songline whilst we dived.

Our first anchorage was at Irai Island: 10 45.973'S:151 42.20'E This calm weather day anchorage is OK in a south easterly but we were pleased to dive the anchor for a safety check as it is in the least steep part of a big long drop off. We had a great dive seeing manta rays, barracuda and lots of big fish. Then we anchored behind the pilot boat at Panaboal Island for the night and had a coral trout we'd caught for dinner. This was our first quiet night in weeks.

#### **Songline – October 2011 - Muniara Island, Conflict Island Group**

Next day we motored down to Muniara Island and dove the eastern drop off between Auriora Island and Muniara Island. Another magical dive and more big fish.

I wanted to stay for more diving but home was tugging at the heartstrings and the weather looked good for a passage.

We headed through the pass between Muniara and Panaraku Islands at about 4pm (with about 10m all the way through the pass - easy to do with clear water and good weather). We then set the sails for Cairns.

The current in the Jomard Channel added 4 knots to our speed and with an escort of dolphins we were quickly out into the Coral Sea for a moonlight sail. All too beautiful!

The weather didn't hold but at least with the extra wind we were back in Cairns on Wednesday morning and glad to be in civilization again.

#### **Songline – September 2011 - Itamarina Island 10 45.622'S:151 46.192'E**

We finally got away from Hummock about 6am on Saturday morning, but not before Remulas, Rodney's venerable and most likable father (the local magistrate) visited us with a wish list in case we returned. The list, in his beautiful old fashioned hand

writing, featured such things as 3inch nails, kerosene, tobacco - they are very poor. He did a magnificent job of piloting us out of the lagoon through the gap in the reef and into the channel, then paddled his canoe back to the island.

Our destination for that day was Ltamarina Island in the Conflict Group: a run of about thirty miles.

The passage into their atoll was easy, from Ship's Passage to Ltamarina Island there was about 30m depth all the way through this unsurveyed area, and we anchored off the island in good shape in about 20m sand and coral. You can probably anchor closer but there is a few bommies to navigate.

The island is uninhabited and probably sees a few cruisers, as somebody has installed a mooring, and a sign on the island announces that the island is a private marine sanctuary and accordingly, collecting turtle eggs or coconuts, killing turtles, cutting down trees, or staying on the island unless in an emergency is STRICTLY FORBIDDEN! We didn't do any of that. We anchored off, snorkelled off the fringing reef which had plenty of fish and coral, and discovered a major local detraction - there lived on the island hordes of small, sticky and persistent flies which we had not struck previously, and they were only too happy to fly out the hundred metres or so and help themselves to everything about Songline, including us! They were a trial, and we were glad to flee the next morning.

Whilst we were there we were visited by three men; a father and two sons, in a large sailing outrigger canoe. They paused on the reef on the way across to lift four crayfish, assuming we would like them. I am ashamed to report that I am over crayfish. I have heard that people who work in chocolate factories etc. We traded for two quite magnificent emperor fish. The three were certainly at home in their environment. They would not have been out of place in Water World... as they approached I looked about for Kevin on his battered jet-ski! Their sailing canoe looked deceptively fragile, but I have seen many of these sailing canoes going to windward at speed in 25 knots of wind, so they are certainly seaworthy.

These people lived on Panniet Island in the Deboyne Island Group, about forty miles away. They were fishing, and seemed to be having much success judging by the fish on board. They are great sailors.

### **Maranatha – May 2012 – Gabugabutau Island:**

Anchorage Waypoint: 10° 43.838S 151° 44.327E

A direct approach from the west to the anchorage waypoint is clear. Anchor in sand in about 5 – 6 metres of water. We sat out 25 + knots of S.E. wind with only small (2-300 mm) wind waves.

### **3.1.15 Renard Islands**

Maranatha – September 2007 – Kimuta Wharf Lagoon:

Anchorage 1 Waypoint: 10°50.436S 152°59.225E Anchor in 7-8 meters

Anchorage 2 Waypoint: 10°50.468S 152°59.198E Anchor in 5 meters

Anchorage 3 Waypoint: 10°50.525S 152°59.134E Anchor in 3 meters

Anchorage 4 Waypoint: 10°50.561S 152°59.150E Anchor in 2.5 meters

All anchorages are on good holding sand and the easterly wind does not create the roll that you get at the normal anchorage. A stern anchor is sometimes required but is well worth it for the bommie free anchorage and good access to the shore by dinghy.

Leave the dinghy to the right of the rock outcrop. There are nine waypoints through Dim Dim Passage to get to the first anchorage. (See the waypoints list).

### **3.1.16 Kamatal Island**

**Songlines – September 2011:** At Kamatal it was still blowing 20+knots as we entered and set our anchor in the eastern part of the lagoon in 24m. Not great. Then we saw Jimmy, from Kamatal paddling out on an old kayak into the driving wind and rain. He came on board Songline and on his advice guided us around the reef into the western part of the lagoon where we anchored in 10m with more protection - much better.

The anchorage was reasonable for a squally night and we could see it would be wonderful in better weather. However, the winds continued. We went ashore to meet Jimmy's family and exchange some books at the yacht club book exchange. Jimmy and his family have done a great job with the yacht club and the visitors' book reports some wonderful times had by yachtsmen there. Next stop Misama.

**Endless Summer – July 2011:** After a week of an almost constant stream of canoes coming out to the boats from the various villages we were anchored near, we were ready for a little break. Our buddy boat Sea Level was in full agreement that we should sail out in search of a place to explore that was uninhabited. With that in mind we set out in light winds and clear skies heading generally toward the islands that lay on the northern edge of the archipelago.

The sea was perfectly calm, and shiny like glass. The fluffy tropical clouds floated improbably close to the water, and improbably tall as they seemed out of proportion. We saw a cluster of low islands about 5 miles to the north, and radioed Sea Level suggesting we explore. As we approached the group, we were watching the water for reefs and shallows.

Once again our charts provided little help. Sea Level was looking for a way into a large area of reef surrounding an island about 3 miles to our north, and we were heading for a little sand island that appeared to be floating alone in the water. The islands were a group of 7 spread out over as many miles and surrounded by a complicated network of coral reefs. We came into a channel between three islands that looked passable, and threaded our way with someone on deck looking for shallow water. We slowly approached one of the islands and were disappointed to find our depth gauge reading over 100 feet deep right up to the edge of the reef. The ocean was so flat and calm, and the water so clear that we were emboldened to go very close to the edge of the reef. We could see right down to the bottom in about 80 feet, and we were able to go along the edge of the reef within feet of the sharp coral.

Unfortunately, as beautiful as it was, there was no way to anchor in water that deep and so close to the reef. We continued searching and just enjoying the spectacular beauty of the small islands. They were just little circles of rock, with white sand beaches, covered with palms and tropical bushes. Sea Level continued searching around the islands the opposite direction from us, and after a while we met having circumnavigated a group of three. At that point we had found what we thought was our best chance of anchoring and we were both dropping and picking up anchors trying to get a safe spot. We were ending up either too close to the reef, or

to close to the edge of the drop off the small shallow patch we had found. Just then to our irritation, two men appeared in a canoe and a kayak respectively. We had hoped that we could get a little break from visitors. Not wanting to be rude, I greeted the older of the two men as the other had paddled over to Sea Level. He was a man in his 60s, paddling a plastic kayak. He introduced himself as Jimmy and said we could anchor near his island across the channel. Skeptical, I double checked that he understood the requirements for anchoring a boat like ours, and he smiled broadly and said, "Can I come aboard? I'll show you where to go." "There is a pass into the lagoon."

After 3:00 PM, it becomes increasingly difficult and then impossible to see the uncharted reefs. We needed to be anchored soon, or spend a night at sea. With this in mind we decided to see what this man Jimmie could show us, although our expectations were low. With that, we tied Jimmie's kayak to our stern and welcomed him aboard. He walked to the bow of Endless Summer and pointed across the channel toward his island a mile or so away. We approached cautiously, as Jimmie pointed the way. The reef came into view, and the bottom came up fast as Jimmie pointed for us to go more to the right. Reef was close by on both sides, but we were indeed still in deep water. We radioed to Sea Level just behind us, "40 feet, 50 feet, 70 feet." Jimmie pointed to go hard to the left and the sun caught the water revealing a large area of sandy bottom in 30 to 40 foot depth.

We had indeed threaded our way through the reef and were in a protected lagoon with plenty of room for our boats and more. We grinned with relief at the happy sight, and dropped our anchor. Over a cup of cold water, Jimmie explained that cruising boats come to his island every year as part of an Australian Rally to the Louisiades. He invited us to come ashore and see the, "yacht club", and then to our amazement he said, "you must be tired, I will leave you now." After the long days of constant visitors we couldn't believe our ears. "Did you hear that?" we said to each other. "I will leave you now." After a swim in the beautiful lagoon, we and the crew on Sea Level took our dinghies outside the reef and snorkeled along the steep drop off. We couldn't believe our good fortune. Only a few hours earlier we were facing a long night at sea, and now we were anchored in a perfect lagoon among a cluster of beautiful small islands waiting to be explored.

**Opal Lady (with Rally) – Oct 2010:** After this mornings sched we pulled our flopper stoppers up and prepared to follow Sanctuary and Let's Go out of South Passage to head for Kamataal Island 26 nm away in 10-22 knt SE winds.

We headed south leaving Redlick Islets to port then passed Mabui Islet and rounded the southern tip and proceeded to the 44m channel north of Pana Sagu Sagu Islet. 10.57.1S – 152.37.5 E . On arrival we handed one of the fish we caught enroute to Jimmy, nick named the harbour master!

The program for the next couple of days was for everyone to take turns to visit Kamataal Island as the anchorages there were small and would require the fleet to take turns. It is also home to the only Yacht Club and book swap library in the Louisiades and is run by Jimmy who also runs the unofficial boys home for wayward youth.

We went fishing in the afternoon around the large coral walls on the outside of the anchorage. The drops were 20-40 metres in places and we caught a Blue Trevally, a Red Emperor and a beautiful 3lb Coral Trout! Our favourite eating fish.

Maranatha – Undated – Pre-2014: Entry to Kamatal Lagoon



W.P. 1 10°58.050 S, 152°42.246 E

W.P. 2 10°57.184 S, 152°42.469 E

W.P. 3 10°56.940 S, 152°42.444 E

Anchorage 10°56.876 S, 152°42.379 E

**Chasse Spleen – June 2009:** The highlight of our stay in the Louisiades was the two weeks spent in Kamatal Island. Yvan who lives with his family on the Motu welcomes the locals travelling in sailing outrigger canoes from Missima to the Calvados Chain Islands.

Kamatal is conveniently located in the middle of the sailing routes and is a very natural stopover for the travellers who try to avoid sailing at night. This is a great pleasure to watch these true double-ender sailing canoe reaching 12m in length which are all made of wood and built only with hand tools.

Kamatal is a stunning small lagoon surrounded by passes and islets, the marine life is prolific and the water visibility is by far the best in the Louisiades.

Yvan is a proud man who enjoys the visit of foreign yachts and Chasse Spleen is the largest so far. He has built a "yacht club" (biggest hut of the village which we thought was the church!) in order to welcome dimdim visitors. He very kindly organised a dinner for us, killing the pig in our honour.

Our relations with Yvan are very friendly (a bit more difficult with his wife who does not speak English) and he visits the boat every day to have a "smoke" with Marc and enjoy a rest away from the village. He is very much in love with his way of life and sees not need to travel to other islands. His passion is the sailing canoes: we discover he is building a new one and we are stunned to see the entire process is done by hand including the planks (no saw, only axes, adzes, chisels and plane). This seems quite unreal in our days.

### ***3.1.17 Misima Island (Airport, Supplies, Hospital)***

**From Wikipidea – 2016:** Misima Island was inhabited by Polynesians since about 1500 BC. The island was sighted in 1768 by French captain Louis Antoine de Bougainville and explored 1793 by French explorer Antoine Bruni d'Entrecasteaux.

Misima island owes its name to Élisabeth-Paul-Édouard de Rossel, which was a lieutenant of the Counter admiral Antoine Bruny d'Entrecasteaux during his journey of scientific exploration. In 1888 the British Empire annexed Misima Island, and it became part of British New Guinea (since 1904 - the Territory of Papua administered by Australia).

At the end of the 1890s gold was discovered on Misima. Their actual mining began early in the 20th century. Since 1975, Misima belongs to the independent state of Papua New Guinea. A gold and silver mine was opened on the island in 1990, by an international corporation. The mines provided plenty of work for the islanders. However, that mine was officially closed in 2004, because of excessive load on the environment, and public health hazards.

Misima has a working airport (IATA: MIS, ICAO: AYMM) (four flights weekly to the mainland (POM via Alotau) through Airlines of Papua New Guinea, and one charter run by Porgera Joint Venture, a high school (grades 7-10), a small market, a few small stores and a clinic/hospital, a post office,--all of which are located in Bwagaioia. There are ferries from Alotau which service Misima Island, costing around K100 and taking 17 hours.[2]

**Obiwan – Oct 2022:** Anchorage **10° 41.213'S 152° 50,745'E**

We arrived in Misima with a strong south east wind. At the beginning it looked like it was dangerous to enter in the narrow inlet of Misima, but as soon as we were closer, the coast protected us a little bit from the swell and we safely entered in the inlet.

There was a small supermarket for basic provisions and diesel.

Nobody approached us and nobody disturbed, we felt safe.

**2XS – October 2016:** There isn't much crime, in Misima. Or rather, there WASN'T much crime. A few months ago the little town was invaded by twelve very bad badboys from Alotau, in three banana boats (motorised dinghies, very speedy.) They were all armed and they made everybody lie down. They targeted the two Asian-owned shops (Korean and Chinese) and were very rude and racially abusive to the owners while ransacking and vandalising both shops. They also, very prudently, stole two big containers of fuel so they wouldn't run out on their long ride home.

So now all of the local businesses, with a deep sigh, are fortifying their properties, with high mesh fences topped with razor wire. It all looks very horrid, and Pete thinks badboys will be able to make their way through these fences very easily anyway, with boltcutters and bad intentions.

For my birthday Pete managed to wrangle a car for the day. He just walked up to a likely looking bloke (Stanley Jack) and asked him. Stanley said, basically, "Leave it with me." We went for a stroll up the road, to the airport, past the new jail, which is due to be opened in October with due ceremony.

Stanley Jack came back with a solid four wheel drive twin-cab ute, so we could see a little of the island. It was a great car, big and solid with aircon, and a very nice never-ending sound track emanating from – radio? CD? We never could find the source, but we did enjoy it.

There was more road on Misima Island than we expected. From the sea it looks impenetrable with steep mountains dropping right down into the sea, and big cliffs, rocky unwelcoming shores. But on land it was all quite different, much more mellow. And much more populated! We hardly ever travelled more than a kilometre before coming across a sizeable village. The villages were all beautiful – neat and tidy, all made from stems and twigs and logs.

There is clearly a population explosion on the island. There were children EVERYWHERE! And most of them have never seen a dimdim (white person) or so we assumed from their reaction.

All of the women carry THINGS on their head. All manner of things, light and heavy. I asked permission to take photos of some of them, and they were thrilled to oblige.

We slowed down near a village in an idyllic beach setting, where I was just amazed and delighted to see three little tots carrying baskets on their heads. I stopped to ask what they

were carrying, and one of their mothers said, very proudly, that they carry gravel from the beach up to the village, to make pathways. The children are very young – maybe ranging in age from 3-5, and they take their work very seriously indeed.

On Mioko Island we were amazed to see lots of children with golden blond hair. On Misima lots of them had glorious RED hair!

On the way back from the north coast we picked up several ute loads of school children, on their way back to their villages from an inter-school competition. They piled into the tray, shouting WAIT! WAIT! until there wasn't room for another body. And then they would drop off and disappear, into the jungle, or into their villages, with a cheery shout as we drove off. (We were going SLOWLY!)

Several miles from town (Bagoia) we picked up a very pleasant man, who had given us some information on our way north. He was still ambling along, quite happily, but was very glad to get a ride. It was getting late, and dark and he had hours of walking ahead of him. He had gone to visit his mother and obviously couldn't afford the bus fare...We discovered that he is a senior teacher at the secondary school, as is his wife. Teachers are very badly paid in PNG. The schools are bearing the brunt of some brutal new government policies. Many of the boarding students have had to be sent home to their far-flung islands because the schools can't afford to feed them, and the parents have no money at all.

We delivered the car back to Stanley Jack and took ourselves off to the boat for a nice G&T and a bit of a rest before our next adventure – dinner at the Guest House. We had made a booking, and we were the only dinner guests. We took our seats and within minutes a series of foil-covered dishes had appeared before us – an iced cake, pumpkin cooked in coconut, taro and sweet potato, fried chicken legs, greens.

All very festive. We walked back down into town to the wharf, and were greeted by happy people, all asking how I had enjoyed my birthday... And the next morning, various random strangers asked me if my birthday dinner had been a success. It would NOT be possible to live a clandestine life, on Misima Island.

There are about six shops in Misima, all of them humming and buzzing with retail activity. Pete, Michael and I were very puzzled about where the money was coming from. Not many people have jobs on the island – the shops employ quite a few; the little Westpac bank probably employs four. There is one nurse at the hospital, a dozen teachers at the school. But the shops are full of villagers – we saw them arriving in big trucks and utes, all cashed up and ready to buy. A mystery!

Michael solved the mystery. He made friends with Isabelle, a canny young woman who runs the one and only liquor store. She asked him if he would like to see where the Misima money comes from – Michael is very good at making friends and finding things out! The cash comes from – GOLD! There is still a lot of gold on the island, although the mine closed down maybe fifteen years ago. Isabelle is ready, willing and able to buy any gold the villagers find, pan, dig up. She weighs it all out and pays them and then...makes, we think, a huge profit.

Misima is a lovely island, and we did enjoy being able to buy onions and garlic and beer in Bagoia but...the water in the harbour is totally full of poos, and possibly full of crocodiles.

**Lousiades.net – 2013 – Bwagoia Harbor:** Misima was one of the most prosperous islands in the region, providing employment for many islanders at the local gold mine until it closed a few years back. Today, it remains one of the most developed parts of the region, and Bwagoia provides key infrastructure for the entire region. Misima was one of the most prosperous islands in the region, providing employment for many islanders at the local gold mine until it closed a few years back. Today, it remains one of the most developed parts of the region, and Bwagoia provides key infrastructure for the entire region.

Approximate Location: Lat/Long: 10°42'S / 152°51'E

Bwagoia Harbour provides good holding in thick mud and is reasonably sheltered. Beware of vessels berthed at the wharves, as they often have anchor lines extending into the bay. Also be careful of the depths north of the dinghy pontoon and close to the mangroves on the eastern side of the bay. There are several underwater obstructions which are usually marked by sticks or buoys in the shallow northern part of the bay, and the mangroves to the east appear to be growing in mud on a rocky ledge.

It is advisable to thoroughly secure your boat when going ashore as there have been thefts reported from yachts at Bwagoia.

If there are many yachts in the anchorage, it may be best to set a stern anchor as there is only enough room for a few yachts to swing. Shallow draft multi-hulls can anchor fairly comfortably bow-in to the eastern mangrove bank, however mono-hulls will find it more comfortable to lie with the bow pointing towards the harbour entrance due to the small swell that sometimes rolls through the harbour.

Bwagoia offers the following facilities:

- flights to/from mainland PNG
- fuel (diesel, unleaded, zoom)
- general store
- police station & lockup
- hospital
- guesthouse
- bakery
- post office
- farmer's market
- Westpac bank (local accounts and foreign exchange only)
- Bwagoia Harbour
- Bwagoia Harbour

Starting at the fuel depot there is a nice short walk along the waterfront to a rocky point close to the harbour entrance.

Joel runs the local fuel depot. His rastafarian style dreadlocks and cheerful grin make him fairly easy to find on the Bwagoia waterfront.

Keith Parascos runs the Misima Guesthouse and Bakery. Keith is a prominent local figure, and the organiser of the annual Showcase Misima cultural festival.

Misima is a very large island, and provides numerous anchorages around its perimeter.

**Songlines – September 2011:** 10 41.21'S:152 50.755'E, Misama Island, PNG

Bwagaoia Harbour, Misama was as expected - an old outpost much reduced since the closure of Misama mine several years ago. The anchorage is open to the south easterlies but protected by the reef and we anchored in about 4m in mud. There are a couple of trade stores and fuel is available at exorbitant prices.

We topped up on trading goods and Mackenzie met his family for the sail back to Brooker Island.

We watched a small sailing canoe tack out of the harbour into the teeth of a 20knot wind; through the 40m wide pass with waves crashing onto the reef on either side. Everything on board is manual and requires quite a few crew to manage. These islanders are great sailors! And I'm glad we have two engines to go with our sails.

**Opal Lady – Oct 2010:** Misima Harbour is only small and it would be a choreographed event to fit all 25 Rally Yachts in. The plan was to raft 3 yachts up together with everyone top and tailed using their bow anchors. To complicate this further the harbour is not very deep and there is a great deal of the space that needed to be kept clear as the planes take off from the airstrip that borders the west side of the harbour. The locals were lined several deep along the western shore in front of the town to welcome us. This was the weekend of their Showcase Misima Festival and some villagers had made the trek from the other side of the island taking 3 days to arrive here for the festivities. Misima is the “city” of the Louisiades, it has a hospital (No doctors), 2 supermarkets (No, nothing like ours, more like the old fashioned Corner Store) a bakery and the Airport (very small).

Just after all 25 yachts were rafted and anchored, the wind changed slightly then began to increase. Lets Go was rafted beside us with their bow to our stern and their anchor out. A large dark cloud mass appeared on the horizon to the east and the rain began to plummet down. The frantic call went out from one of the yachts on the seaward side of the harbour for all tenders to come to the aid of the 20m derelict boat that was dragging anchor and in danger of causing havoc on us all. So Alan took off in the tinny as did most others that were able to and played tug boats.

They nudged the hull with the help of natives on deck and secured it to the mangroves that were lining the harbour. There was a little more room opened up ahead of us and whilst he was away I began to re anchor, so we had a lot more anchor chain out. He returned to see us moving forward in our tiny space and jumped on board to assist. We reset the main anchor and then put out our second bow anchor to starboard using the tinny to place the anchor. He then took Lets Gos' stern anchor off them and located it well off to their port stern quarter. We were then happy with our position as the winds were increasing and a few moments later as the wind was strengthening further, the mayhem began in full force!

One after another of the rafts of three yachts ahead of us started to drag anchor. By now the wind was blowing 45knots across the harbour. We held fine but the danger was the number of yachts dragging and seeing we were the last row in this small U- Shaped harbour we were getting understandably nervous!!

A few of the cats went behind us and anchored on the mud flats that would dry at low. The owner of a small local boat moored behind us was calling for help (actually he must have been screaming for us to have heard him, seeing we were to windward). The 2 Al's went to the rescue. More wet clothing! There were yachts being pushed into each other, screams, cries of help on the VHF as everyone tried to stay clear of everyone else. We did manage to fend off a few boats and there were definitely a few tense moments but all in all we remained unscathed.

Because of the harbour floor being churned up with so many anchors going up and down several boats had issues with motors failing as their sea strainers became blocked. We had trouble, our generator stopped pumping water, and white smoke was coming out so I quickly turned it off and Alan spent the next hour in the engine room sourcing the problem! Blocked strainer as well!

One yacht ended up putting to sea for 24hrs until the weather abated. Not much sleep was had that night by most that night! We were the rock in the harbour and apparently slept through more havoc at 2am!

Just prior to the storm the Quarantine people were being ferried from boat to boat. The cost for this was K100 for Quarantine Pratique and K56 for Vessel Clearance. As they cleared your boat, you were then responsible to take them to another boat. Sounds O.K! But add to this the 45knts wind and torrential rain! What an exciting afternoon! Bailing the tinny became a constant activity. Just from Opal Lady to Medusa, 300m upwind of us required Alan to bail again before he could put the Customs people in the tinny! It was nearing 4.30pm by now. They worked well into the evening and Sanctuary gave them dinner and sent them to the local Guest House for the night, they still had 6 yachts to clear the following day! The rally had paid their flights in, to clear us this is not a normal port of clearance.

Next day... The calm after the storm and in the light of day all the yachts ahead of us were mostly anchored on their own. A few started to lick their wounds, several had scraps and bruises and some needed panel beating and their stanchions straightening!

We assembled on the shore at 11am to be welcomed and by one of the local dance groups who then led us up the road to the playing fields, where the tarp covered seating was arranged in front of the official platform overlooking the playing fields. The welcome and traditional dances and singers performed for a few hours before the pinnacle event of the day - The Miss Misima Showgirl Competition. The judges were 2 of the Rally Ladies and one village elder. Each was given a score card and the girls paraded in front in their traditional grass skirts! Only! Funny but none of the men were bored watching this event!!!

That evening we attended the Guest House for the Rally Dinner and were treated to a banquet of traditional foods. Following dinner Guy conducted a Charity Auction. Each boat was asked to bring something useful and something bazaar to donate to the auction. We took a jar of Water Cherry(local fruit) Jam that I had made that afternoon(80K), 8 pieces of Chocolate Caramel Slice(K60), 2 bottles of red wine in a cooler bag(K325 ) 2 single bottles of Red Wine(K125 ea). The Auction raised several thousand dollars for the Nimowa Clinic.

All laded with shopping bags full of useful items for the ladies we went ashore to the Pem Pewa (translated means give/receive) ceremony that is a popular way to raise money here where 2 people exchange gifts after having given a sum of money to the worthy cause.(K5). People

participating from 2 lines and after the singing of the Pem Pewa song they exchange gifts. Because of the large numbers of local ladies we all made 3 or more bags per person. All this took place with showers of rain and another squall, must be the norm as the locals carry on regardless.

We received some beautifully made baskets full of fruit and veg decorated with frangipani flowers. Most of the food was donated to the hospital or the next island that we visited as it was far more than Alan and I could consume! After the ladies helped us take it back to the tinny we had to take our passports and ship's papers to the Guest house where the customs official was waiting. We cleared in and out at the same time.

Maranatha – Oct 2007 – Bwagaoia Harbor:

Entrance Waypoint: 10° 41.595S 152° 50.874E

Approach Waypoint: 10° 41.800S 152° 50.900E

The entrance to Bwagaoia Harbour is pretty straight forward although there can be quite big swells out for a couple of miles from the entrance if there has been strong southwest to east winds. The depth shallows suddenly from several hundred metres to forty then twenty then ten within a hundred metres of the entrance.

There is a lit beacon (flashing white 5 seconds) on the starboard side when entering. On the port side is an unlit beacon. Both are on the coral reef at the sides of the entrance. Once inside, proceed up the harbour and anchor anywhere making allowance for the trading boats to have access to the wharf area.

Deep keel vessels should not go further north than the wreck on the eastern side of the bay as the bottom shoals fairly quickly after that. The bottom is good holding mud however the anchor can get fouled by large plastic bags and other debris in the mud.

Maranatha – Oct 2007 – Guluwa:

Anchorage Waypoint: 10° 38.146S 152° 44.241E

Approach Waypoint: 10° 37.667S 152° 44.198E

By far the best anchorage on the north coast of Misima Island. Keep as close as possible to the port side and there will be no roll. Anchor in 4 to five meters in good holding sand.

Maranatha – Aug 2012 – Siagara:

Approach Waypoint: 10°37.111S 152° 45.577E

Anchorage Waypoint: 10°37.766S 152° 45.857E

Aim straight for the anchorage from the approach way point. There is some low weed just before the anchorage which looks like coral from a distance. Anchor in 4 to 5 metres in good holding sand.

This anchorage is very good in strong south to SSE winds but can get rolly if the wind goes further east. Guluwa is better than.

**Maranatha – Oct 2005 – Eborā Anchorage:** Anchorage Waypoint: No need for this, it is fairly obvious where to anchor when you arrive.

Approach Waypoint: 10° 37.705S 152° 31.253E

This is a lovely anchorage which will fit in about four vessels. After arriving at the approach waypoint head into the anchorage (bay) and drop the anchor in about 15-20 metres then drop back and tie the stern to a coconut tree leaving enough under the keel for low water. It is advisable to tie to the tree and keep the excess rope on board as it has been known to disappear if the excess is left shore-side.

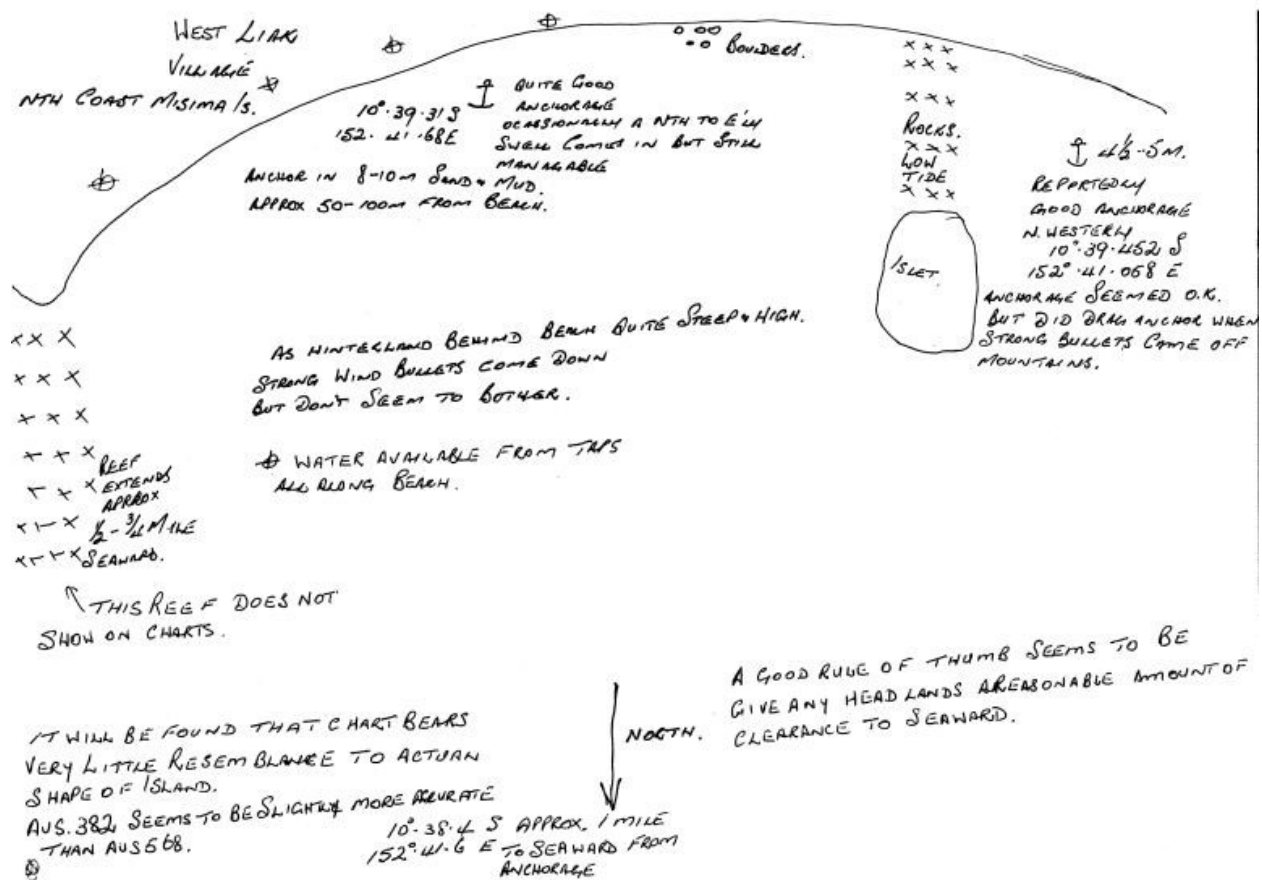
We have a 2 meter draft and still have a few inches under the keel.

Maranatha – Oct 2004 – West Liak:

Anchorage Waypoint: 10° 39.452S 152° 41.057E

There is some roll at this anchorage but the main problem is that the bottom is small pebbles through which the anchor tends to drag. Beware of the uncharted reef that comes out some distance from the shore to the east of this anchorage. Better anchorage at East Liak.

See hand sketch made by Bruce Bentley



Maranatha – October 2008 - East Liak:



Anchorage Waypoint: 10° 38.912S 152° 42.165E

Approach Waypoint: 10° 38.534S 152° 41.853E

This is the better of the anchorages at Liak as the bottom is good holding sand in about five metres of water. It may be necessary to deploy a stern anchor if there is any roll. The shore break can be a problem getting in and out of the dinghy.

Beware of a reef which comes out from the shore for quite a distance west of this anchorage, it is not shown on any chart. It is possible to anchor west of the reef but the bottom is gravel and the anchor is liable to gradually work its way through it.

Maranatha – Aug 2002 – Maranatha Bay:

Anchorage Waypoint: 10° 39.154S 152° 32.489E

Approach Waypoint: 10° 39.740S 152° 32.461E

This is a similar anchoring situation to Eborā – drop anchor in fifteen to twenty meters and fall back and tie to coconut tree. There is only room for one vessel in this anchorage and Maranatha is the only yacht that has anchored there according to the locals. They have named it Maranatha Bay although the nearest village is Bulabulalah.

Like Eborā, it can be blowing thirty knots outside and be calm at the anchorage.

### **3.1.18 Nimowa Island**

Songlines – September 2011: 11 118.344'S:153 14.664'E, Nimowa Island, PNG

In some ways Nimowa Island has been a culmination of our Louisiade cruising. Nimowa Island is the furthest east we will sail this trip; the site of the Nimowa Island Mission and Health Centre; and a wonderful collection of characters: locals, immigrants and visitors. The wide range of people here have informed us of the area and issues facing the Louisiades and as the main outpost/station for the outer Louisiades they have both the facilities of a more prosperous life and service the surrounding islands who see almost no aid or support from the mainland. Such is the distance a councillor said to us, that all the yachtsmen have depleted their trading stocks once they get here and they have nothing left to trade!

Wonderful characters include the legendary and venerable Father Tony who arrived from Melbourne as a young priest in 1964 and serves the people with extraordinary dedication; Brother Tony from Rabaul, fresh out of college last year and keeper of the school internet and movie services, (an important bloke to know); Isaac, chairman of the school council and local elder with much mainland experience; Jimmy, the local councillor, once a teacher in Port Moresby, a font of local knowledge and one of Father Tony's early proteges; and Raphael, the local village policeman, a young go getter charged with preparing for the upcoming Kula trading ring feast. Add to that the small but diverse collection of cruisers in the bay, some of whom were on their 18th trip to the Louisiades and it made for a fascinating few days with many stories told. Nimowa Island is a phenomenon.

Nimowa Island Health Center: What an amazing job the staff do at the hospital! We visited with some donations of baby clothes, which the staff give to new mothers in an effort to encourage women to come into the hospital to give birth and so reduce maternal and infant mortality. With only a AUD\$30,000 pa budget and no support from the government, the four trained sisters and several assistant health workers staff and operate the hospital. The local ambulance boat, a donation from some yachties (PAYC) several years ago takes urgent cases - generally women in complicated labour, but all sorts of emergencies - even crocodile attacks - to Misama Hospital where there is a better health facility staffed by an extension health officer. The nearest doctor is Alotau - a long way by sailing canoe. Kevin Rudd's recent announcement of new health clinics for PNG is welcomed but where will they get the staff and supplies? We were asked for Panadol by staff at Nimowa as the Health Centre had run out. Phil has memories of a broken hand in a Tongan hospital with an x-ray machine but no film or staff to operate it.

### **3.1.19 Sabara Island (11-07S / 153-05E) (Sabari, Sabri)**

**Opal Lady – October 2010:** Sabara Island anchorage is a very pretty bay with several small islets that border the bay. We entered between these islets into crystal clear water with depths of only 3m throughout. Really protected.

The daily temperature was 30+degrees and you could nearly set your watch to the storms every afternoon. The children enjoyed the daily iceblocks, they devoured them as quick as our freezer would freeze them.

By the end of the week there were 10 yachts in the small anchorage and a whip around raised A\$500 to purchase some roof iron, a watertank and the guttering so the village collect their own water. Presently they had to travel 8nm to a nearby island to collect their fresh water.

On our final day there we visited the local school at the eastern end of the island, 4nm away by boat and gave them another of our school packs and again mobbed by the children whilst giving out lollies. They quickly organised an impromptu traditional dance to thank us! On the way home we investigated another bay that held the local Mud Crab Farm. They collected the small crabs from a neighboring island and placed them inside the fenced area until they were full grown.

### **3.1.20 Kunawak Island**

**Songlines – September 2011:** Robinson's Anchorage at Kunawak Island was peaceful after the Gigila Island anchorage though we had the usual stream of visitors looking to trade. Particularly, now the soccer finals are coming up, there is an increase in requests for soccer balls, soccer shoe repairs, soccer socks and shorts.

### **3.1.21 Moturina Island**

**2XS – September 2016:** 11-04.511 S / 152-34.442E 5.9m sand/coral

We spent a few nights anchored in a slightly rocky place, with sand and coral beneath us. This is where the boarding school is. We did a quick visit, with our friend Daisy (met on Misima Island.) She came out to the boat, with phones to charge, clothes to be mended, and was a sane and sensible guide to the island. She has invited us to dinner, when we return with Michael in a week or so.

**Songlines – September 2011:** The weather has been brilliant - warm, clear, gentle breezes. Each morning's sail to a new destination is a joy. We anchored in Riman Bay, Moturina Island amongst some rally boats and as it was still school holidays we, and everyone else, were inundated with kids.

Neighbouring cruisers soon had enough, wanting to return to Oz and so offloaded much of their giveaways to us, requesting we donate to a primary school for them. We're happy to oblige and saw them off to Australia.

Next morning we motored out to the small island north of Moturina, Saru Nom Nom Island for a very nice drop off dive from Songline's stern.

### **3.1.22 Ninan Island**

**2XS – September 2016:** 11-03.870 S / 152-35.121E

This morning I had a last swim from bommie to bommie across our Bagaman Island bay, and then we set off for Moturina Island in 2XS, towing Moses's banana boat behind us, and carrying aboard Moses, Simon, and five very happy children. (Towing to save fuel for Moses.)

We dropped them off at a small island, where they were going to go fishing, and went on to find a most beautiful anchorage just across from Moturina, off Ninan Island, which is small, gorgeous, and uninhabited (a plus...) Uninhabited by humans but inhabited by MANY birds! Kites, eagles, parrots, pigeons, cockatoos. Fabulous!

We are anchored quite closer to shore, in a more or less sandy patch, surrounded by very nice coral bommies. We went for a long swim to explore the underwater landscape, where we managed to annoy a moray eel before making our way back to the boat to scrub. Actually who knows if the moray eel was annoyed? It is hard to tell; they have very vicious-looking faces, and they poke a bit of their long body and all of their crabby-looking face out of their hole to look at passing strangers. Maybe they are just interested; I always think they look PISSED OFF!

## **3.2 Engineer Group**

### **3.2.1 Hazard and Hummock Islands**

**Free Bird – December 2014:** In the Engineer group of islands we stayed a while at Hazard and Hummock Islands. This is a very pretty spot with anchorage in the lagoon north of Hummock with an easy entrance on the east side and a better anchorage to the west of Hummock that takes a bit of care to enter.

We had a local pilot, Leonard, from one anchorage to the next but if you go around to the S.W. entrance it is easier.

The village on Hummock is very neat and tidy and we found several nautilus shells on the beach of Hazard Is. Miriam, a local woman of some standing, guided us to the first anchorage by waving a palm frond on the beach and then came out to greet and welcome us. Traditional sailing canoes are still used for transport here and are quite interesting.

**Songlines - September 2011:** We are at anchor in the lagoon off Hummock Island in the Engineer Group off the South East tip of Papua New Guinea. We have had two nights in the lagoon. We were chased in here on Tuesday by an enthusiastic South-Easterly, which had

thrown up two to three metres of wet confusion. Coming into the lagoon through the recommended gap in the reef, with significant breakers close by on each side was...well... focusing! Because of the overcast conditions, the rain and the poor visibility we couldn't pick the bommies once we were inside the lagoon, so we anchored as the guidebook suggested on the northern edge up against Hazard Island. It was fine at low tide - we could see and hear the waves outside breaking on the reef nearby, but as the tide lifted, the tops of the waves scooted across the coral barrier, leapt into the lagoon and made for us; and a bumpy couple of hours. Songline's anchor was well dug into sand, so we let out some more chain and settled down that night to watch a DVD..

Hummock and Hazard are about a kilometre apart at opposite ends of a fringed lagoon typical in most (but not all) respects to the lagoons encountered throughout The Caribbean, Central America and the Pacific. The islands are in most places about two metres in elevation, surrounded by a beach of blinding white sand and covered in a riot of green, overseen by a forest of coconut trees, casuarinas and rain trees.

The lagoon is as advertised in all the brochures; all shades of aqua merging in the deeper water to a deep and brilliant blue. Hummock Island, where most of the locals live is about two hundred metres across and about eight hundred metres long. Hazard Island on the other side of the lagoon is a little larger.

A feature of Hummock, which distinguishes it somewhat from most coral atolls are three rocky pimples. The largest composes the western aspect of Hummock and is about two hundred feet high. Another about half the size sits in the lagoon, and a third about the size of the second hangs like a drop off the eastern end of Hummock, anchoring one of the wings of the fringing reef. About fifty people - maybe six to ten families - live on Hummock in a village sited with an aspect that would be any resort developer's dream. The villagers have built their houses on a triangular section of the island pointing out into the lagoon. It is protected from the south east winds by the hill feature, and by stands of coconuts, casuarinas and raintrees. A powder fine white sand beach runs on two sides down to the water and something about the flow of the tide has shaped a sand bottomed aqua coloured trench between the beach and the coral in the lagoon. It is a perfect swimming pool at all stages of the tide. Outrigger canoes, current and derelict, are scattered along the beach. A resort architect could not design a better or more picturesque location. Houses are scattered around a large cleared square, and a new and quite modern church sits a little back from the water. Tracks lead off into the village gardens and to the several homesteads scattered further along the island. The gardens are surprisingly prolific; Hummock and the two pimples have a significant volcanic component, and fish, crayfish and squid seem abundant. The people here lack for most things, but they see about twenty yachts a year, and are good at tugging at cruisers' heartstrings, so things are better for them than for some. There are adults there, and children up to about six or seven, but most of the older children and teenagers are absent for much of the year at school on Watt Island, about five miles away.

There is constant traffic between Hummock and Watt and its close neighbor Skelton Island. In good weather people set out in these fragile outrigger canoes with only centimetres of freeboard. Many have sails contrived of various materials... the ubiquitous blue poly tarp, reinforced with tape is popular. In wind they skip along, though a good bailer is essential! After

our first bumpy night we were convinced to move to a more protected anchorage up against Hummock Island.

Rodney came on board and helped us to manoeuvre amongst the bommies and showed us where to place our anchor. We had a much better night's sleep subsequently. We were then visited by the first of a series of visitors. They bought crayfish, shells of extraordinary size, colour or type, fruit, vegetables, fish, baskets, shell jewellery; they were all inveterate traders. They were all delightful - well mannered, thoughtful of our privacy, clearly happy to have visitors, and well aware that Songline contained much that they wanted. They were not much interested in money, but sugar, rice, tinned fish, biscuits, fishing hooks and fishing line, clothes, batteries, glass jars, biro, magazines all had appeal. After several days amongst the Hummock Island people, Songline was considerably lighter and we had more pumpkin, sweet potato, limes, crayfish, fish and shells than we knew what to do with.

Several personalities come to mind. Remulas is the local magistrate. Magistrates and village policemen are elected by the village and settle small local disputes and malfeasances. He is a venerable and courtly old gentleman who spent hours on the back deck drinking tea and talking to us about his time in Goroka in the PNG highlands as a school teacher, and the history and happenings on Hummock Island. He was certainly somebody whose visits we enjoyed.

Rodney was one of Remulas' sons. He seemed to be Mister Perpetual Motion. He was one of a handful of people who lived on Hazzard Island, and was full of plans to raise chickens and pigs for sale on the bigger islands nearby. His wife, Rosemary was from Skelton Island and her traditional land entitlement enabled them to maintain a house and membership of that community also. Rodney and his brothers were partners in a banana boat but fuel was expensive and for business only and so the commute between Watt Island (the school), Skelton Island (Rosemary's family) Hummock Island (Rodney's family) and Hazzard Island (their house and piggery/farm) was continuous and the 'family car' for Rodney, Rosemary and their two toddlers still at home was their sailing outrigger. Even the pigs were carted upside down in the canoe! It seems that weekly they would move across the five or so miles of open water in their canoe.

Weather and sea states are a constant interest for them, and they are very accomplished forecasters. Rodney made the point that when we wanted to know the weather we looked down and into our equipment, whereas they looked up and out at the sky. Our experience was that looking out was better than looking in. Sailing at night is also common and they all know the stars for their regular routes. One of Rodney's brothers was Joe. Joe was the antithesis of Rodney. Joe was happy to go fishing, play with his kids, and generally hang out. He was however an extraordinarily good fisherman. Like most of the locals, if he had no bait he would attach some chicken down to a hook, catch a certain type of fish that fell for chicken feathers, and then use that fish for bait.

Sinkers are stones secured with a pandanus leaf thong. He took me fishing out on the reef and managed to catch most of the fish. He could tell by the feel of a bite what type of fish was biting, and would move his line if it was not a fish he wanted. They use fish flesh or fish gut depending on what fish are about, and generally don't carry a knife. They use their teeth to bite the bait pieces. I chose to take a knife!

**Diving Button Reef:** Whilst at Hummock Island we dove the southern reef drop off from Button Island, the tiny islet between Hummock and Hazard Islands. The reef top is a good snorkel at

low tide and the drop off worthwhile for a scuba dive. We anchored the tender on the reef top in a patch of sand in 4m at about 10 36.382'S:151 22.086'E and went down the gentle slope to about 18m then swam along the sloping wall to the north and back along the reef top to the tender. There are heaps of fish and plenty of coral and no current on this particular afternoon when it was blowing 20 knots on the reef outside the islands. Phil thought it the prettiest dive for awhile.

On a return visit in October, Henry, the Hummock Island policeman, sailed with us en route to Alotau and we dropped him to the village Divie on the mainland near the Killerton Islands. It highlighted the problem islanders have returning to the mainland without money to pay for their costs. Henry had been out fishing to catch fish for his family to pay for his visit but had no luck. However, we caught three excellent fish trolling during the trip so he was thrilled to be able to take fish to his home village. Chatting with Henry during the trip we found he had gone to grade 10 and once been a bulldozer driver on the mainland, shifting logs. When he married a Hummock Island girl (from his mother's village) he chose to make his home on the island opting out of the rat race... he cites clean air and good living for his children as key factors but "what about no income" we asked?? He hopes to make some money when the beche de mer season opens up again next year. It seems a not uncommon decision to go back to the island lifestyle by many who could choose town life.

**Ondine (SSCA Bulletin) – 1988:** This is a most beautiful place where the people are really nice and honest. The entrance looks tricky but is not if conducted with cautiousness and in good light conditions.

The chief of the village of Tewa Tewa is Romulus and he is keeping an interesting yacht book for us to sign. There are anchorages there in all winds and any yacht that draws 9 feet or less should have no problem negotiating the bank in to the anchorage.

### **3.2.2 Watts Island**

**Songline – October 2011:** Remulas, the old magistrate at Hummock Island, and his family agreed to accompany us to Watts Island the next day to give the yachties' donations of school supplies to the school and we ended up with fifteen passengers on board Songline. Luckily it was a beautiful day and the journey across the lagoon took only an hour.

It was lots of fun with the Hummock Island blokes hauling on sails and checking out our navigation system. They think we're rather funny needing all these 'extra' things on our boat when they sail many miles across open water with just the stars to guide them, in their very basic canoes held together with bits of string!

The Watts Island School Principal, Jeff Rubin and teacher, Stella were very pleased with books and school supplies from the cruisers. It is a gorgeous school and stunningly beautiful island.

Our anchorage at Watts Island was excellent in the south easterly at: 10 37.041'S:151 17.432'E

We returned to Hummock Island with Remulas and his family. His sons: Rodney, Frank and Joe are excellent crew and that night they joined us on the back deck with their wives and children for a movie.

### **3.2.3 Skelton Island**

**Songlines – August 2011:** The run from Hemoe Bay to Skelton Island in the Engineer Island Group was only about fifteen miles, but punching into a strengthening south easterly, it took nearly four hours, and was not much fun. We eventually anchored in a bay in the lee of Skelton Island on sand, but well out. A closer anchorage looked somewhat dodgy. The swell was coming around the headland to the south, and we thought a bumpy night was in store. The next viable anchorage was miles away, it was too late to shift, and so we were resigned to an uncomfortable, rolling night. Then the wind and swell dropped and things looked up. There is a surprising counterpoint to our observation about the poverty at Hemoe Bay. It seems there are villages and family groups that, despite the isolation, seem to thrive.

On Skelton Island live a group who appear on first impressions... we arrived yesterday and have not yet been ashore... to be faring significantly better. The teenagers who visited us were better dressed, appeared to have better English than we had struck previously, they had some really interesting shells to barter, and wanted light bulbs, sewing cotton, fishing gear and DVDs! Evidently they have ashore a solar battery system, a generator and a malfunctioning TV - could I fix it?

The question we were interested to answer was why it is that Skelton Island was doing so much better economically than Hemoe Bay. Were we misled by first impressions about Skelton Island or are they winning? Tomorrow there may be answers ashore.

Later, after dark, we noticed two large fires close to one another on the beach ashore. We were wondering why they were there, when we heard a banana boat approaching. The fires marked a gap in the fringing reef and in this boat raced, no lights, and at speed. As they went past Songline, we were thankful that we had remembered to turn on the mooring light. That boat would not have expected us to be there, it was a dark night, and had they not seen us they would have gone right through us and out the other side! Later still we noticed an isolated phosphorescent glow which appeared to be in the shallows near the closer beach to the north. After learned debate between Master (or is the proper term Mistress? - the jury is still in deliberation) and crew of Songline, the spooky aura was put down to the phosphorescent swirl of large fish attacking bait fish in the shallows. There we were transfixed by the wonders of nature when it was suddenly revealed to us that what we were really watching was somebody walking along the beach with an LED torch. So much for the wonders of nature... more the wonder of the spread of technology! Sadly the wind got up again in the morning and reluctantly we decided that we couldn't visit ashore on Skelton Island as conditions were worsening and we had a two hour run to our next anchorage in the lagoon off Hummock Island, with a tricky gap entry at the end - hopefully we can visit them later.

We later learned the local Milne Bay councillor had a house on Skelton Island and the islanders had good access to the mainland. What a difference it makes to their lives!

### **3.2.4 Tube Tube**

**Maranatha – June 2007 – Tube Tube:** Anchorage Waypoint: 10° 34.887S 151° 11.350E

Good anchorage in sand with seven metres of water. Little roll even in strong southeast to east winds.

### **3.2.5 Wiyaloiki Island**

**Obiwan – Sep 2022 – Black Rock:** Anchorage 10° 34.779'S 151° 16.674'E

Good holding if you find a sand spot between the corals. At high tide is a bit rollie

Nice little village, about 15 people. Very kind and welcoming. We traded for lobster, bananas and papaya.

They asked for children's clothes, fishing gear, t-shirt.

### **3.3 Far Out Eastern Islands**

#### **3.3.1 Nukuria / Nuguria**

**L'il Explorers – June 2018:** We spent about a week at the main village just inside the pass. As one would expect the people are very friendly, and do not really ask for anything.

The diving at the pass was excellent, with lots of big fish to watch. The fish were primarily gathered at the mouth of the pass where the drop-off is.

We did not do much exploring around the atoll, though there do appear to be many beautiful places to see based on the satellite images. The Navionics charts are off by more than a mile.

**Field Trip – August 2017:** 03 20.4S / 154 40.6E We just checked in with the chief after we arrived. They are a very nice Polynesian village. Similar to the Mortlocks (our last anchorage), and they speak the same language. We asked about yachts, and they have only had one yacht, a year ago, that stayed here for two days.

The landscaping and cleanliness of this village were immaculate! Absolutely one of the more beautiful villages we've ever walked through. The array of plants that they have growing here is abundant and diverse. Walking along the sandy paths, I wonder how on earth they can get so many varieties to grow here!

Everyone greets us kindly as we are led through the small village by some of the community officials. They are proud of their village, and I appreciate how much community effort must go into keeping it looking so pristine.

As usual, I ask if we can please see the school and perhaps meet some of the teachers there. The school grounds are fantastic. A vast, flat playing field sits right in between the teacher's housing and the classrooms. On the far end, palm trees line the beach in a single row, lined up like students ready for school to begin. We meet the head teacher and right away, he is eager to collaborate on some lessons. So, we set a time to meet the very next day with all the teachers in order to discuss how I can join them in their educational endeavors. Imagine my surprise when one of the teachers asks me if I could model a 'whole language' style lesson for them!! I'll have to really delve into my teaching strategies memory bank for that one!

Meanwhile, Michael and his new friends have found the perfect jungle gym on the beach. A tangle of tree branches and roots has been made into a climbing wonderland with the simple addition of some wooden steps and heavy duty netting. Any time we return to shore, this is sure to be the spot we'll find the kids.



During our final days here, the school organizes an assembly for us. A tarp is set up to protect us (and the massive speakers and sound equipment) from the afternoon rains. All the students are decked out in greenery and flowers. The older girls present each of us with a lei of ornate greenery that smells herbal and fresh. As is the case with many of these assemblies, various people give speeches of thanks and welcome, and I am asked to stand and make a speech, too! Then, each class takes its turns performing cultural dances and songs in traditional costumes, using a stick to beat percussion on an empty water jug as accompaniment. Afterwards, the mothers of the students carry in pots and bowls filled with local foods that they had prepared for our lunch - fish, rice, banana fritters, fresh papaya, and more. It is quite the spread! Even after our teacher meeting the other day, we were served a full meal! The endless hospitality and kindness we have encountered in these remote societies astounds and humbles me. Never do we leave a village with empty bellies!

The time I spent here was mostly school-related. It wasn't until the last day that I finally had a chance to talk with some of the ladies of the village. While sitting around underneath her stilted home, I noticed that one of the girls was suffering from a skin fungus, and I was glad I hadn't totally emptied out my backpack from our last village visit. A single tube of antifungal cream was still tucked deep inside. I quietly handed it to the young lady, and she thanked me with a shy grin. In turn, her mother noticed my excitement at seeing a fresh basil plant growing in a pot nearby, and she proceeded to cut a clump of the beautiful herb for me. I inhaled the poignant fragrance, imagining the luxury of adding it to the pasta dish we'd have for dinner. What a treat!

The kind people of Nuguria show care in everything they do. The village is beautifully maintained, the schoolteachers strive for excellence, and the community radiates a genuine care for their fellow man. What an ideal example of what community living can be.

**Diving:** Unfortunately the snorkeling/diving is not great. I was amazed at how barren the passes were. We went to three of them and they all were gray, few fish, and the coral was poor. This was true on the outside as well. It was a real bummer as we expected that we would have great diving here. We will go and explore the final pass that is NE of here about 6NM. We hope here it will be better as it is farther away from the village and on the other side of the atoll.

**Shango – November 2012:** We arrived at Nuguria in the early morning and made our way through the pass south of Nugarba Island with good light. The pass is quite straightforward in good weather and good light. There are several passes to choose from we later discovered.

The pass north of the island of Nugarba is considered a ship pass so might be better in bad weather. We didn't use it so can't attest to this.

We anchored off the main village on Nugarba Island, trying to find a spot with relatively little coral. After several months in the Solomons we were shocked to be left unvisited. After a quick tidy-up we launched the dinghy and went in to say hello. We were greeted by a pleasant fellow and taken to the "COE" which, it turns out, is the Council of Elders. There we were introduced to Robinson, one of the elders. After a nice chat he found his son and some of his son's friends to take us for a tour of the village. After the rather ramshackle appearance of some of our recent destinations the cleanliness of Nugarba was startling. The sand "sidewalks" were bordered by stick fences which were landscaped with a variety of flowering shrubs. The houses were all on stilts for air circulation and the gardens were tidy plots with pumpkin, taro and other miscellaneous goodies.

Nuguria Atoll is yet another Polynesian Outlier. Somehow Polynesians found their way this far west and settled here. The village is relatively prosperous. Unlike many Solomon Islanders the Nugurians have fiberglass boats with outboard motors which they use to fish. The Islanders export shark fins, beche de mer and trochus shells for which they are well paid. They have an island on the eastern side of the Atoll which they refer to as a "conservation" island so perhaps there is some thought being given to the sustainability of this way of life.

There had been no supply ship in six months so we unloaded the remainder of our edible trade goods, thus making some inroads in unburdening the quarter berth. After signing the Yacht Log maintained by a pleasant fellow named Bill we headed back to the boat and called it a day.

The following day we lifted the anchor and headed across the Atoll to the conservation island. Unfortunately the heavens opened on our way across and it was all guesswork getting to our new spot. Roger was on the bow looking for bombies and I had taken a general bearing on our destination before the visibility went away so we were able to get where we were going without incident. Did I mention that the charts were useless?

The next day I went for a snorkel and was surprised to find that the coral was in disarray. I'm not sure if it was just generally unhealthy or if there had been some sort of seismic happening. We didn't stay long enough to try other areas unfortunately. We needed to get to Kavieng to check in.

### **3.3.2 *Mortlock Islands / Tauu Islands / Nukerikia Island***

**L'il Explorers – June 2018:** We arrived at the Mortlock Islands from Liapari (Soloman Islands) after a few days of light winds and lots of drift sailing. We waited outside the pass until we had good enough light to enter. We entered through the southern pass and hung a sharp right turn into the "shortcut pass" just after clearing the main Reef. This worked very well and the depth never went below 30'.

The biggest island is used as their cemetery, and garden area. There are many mosquitoes on this island.

The islanders live on the neighboring island and are Polynesian. The men and women wear lap-laps, and the entire village really appear to enjoy having visitors. This is a very friendly village, and not pushy, with no ask-ums (except from one guy named Apoki).

We did a fair amount of fiberglass repair on their fleet of sailing canoes, I am sure they will need more repairs every time someone arrives, and this is a great way to meet everyone. In a show of gratitude they arranged a traditional outrigger race for us. Sails were composed of various pieces of tarps, chunks of old sails, and rice bags.

We spent just over 2 weeks visiting and exploring around the village, before we headed off to the western side of the Lagoon for some alone time and a visit to the bird refuge island. (Bird island)

Bird island is filled with nests, and there are baby everywhere!

The diving in the western pass near bird island was super with many big fish and large Schools of barracuda, and tuna.

We truly loved the Mortlock Islands. It is one of our favorite places.

**Field Trip – August 2017:** Our first stop in PNG was a tiny remote group of islands called Mortlock Islands just northeast of Bougainville. It would be the first of many remote village islands we'd visit as we stayed clear of mainland PNG and all the crime associated with the busy port towns there.

Matt on SV Perry had been in communication with a professor from Australia who had studied this particular island community, documenting their unique customs and language. Scientists have also been studying the effects of climate change on this island very closely. In the emails, Matt also found out that the people here didn't have access to medical supplies, so while we were in Honiara waiting for one of our many shipments, we stocked up on some medical necessities and are excited to hand them over to the chiefs here.

The **pass** into the lagoon was deep and wide. A fish nabbed our lure right as we entered the pass, so I jumped up to helm while Mark dealt with the fish. Unfortunately, it was a big monster with sharp teeth that sliced right through the steel leader and took all the tackle with it. Bummer. The sky was cloudy, but it was low tide, and the reef was above the water's surface making it really easy to navigate through. In the middle of the lagoon the depth measured 82 meters, and we got another hit on our line. This time Mark reeled it in, thinking we'd caught a shark at first, but eventually realizing that the sharks were just feasting on the big tuna we'd hooked! By the time it got to the boat, only one third of it remained. It was a whopper, though, so we kept the head to gift to the village chief and were able to carve some hefty fillets off of what remained of the body. Elizabeth marveled at how cleanly those shark teeth had sliced through the flesh and hunted for shark teeth in what was left behind.

Once anchored, we were amazed that no one came out to greet us. It was like the island was deserted! A few other islands dotted the fringing reef, but this was the biggest. Elizabeth and Michael stowed the lines and I went to the galley to fix lunch. It was odd - not a soul was walking along the beach. No canoes were being paddled our way. Mark and I started making up possible reasons why we hadn't had visitors yet.

"Maybe because it's Sabbath. They might not be able to row their canoes out today."

"Yeah, but that's never stopped other villages we visit. I mean, how many boats come here? Surely us arriving is kind of a big event, right?"

"Hmm. Maybe they've all gone to the mainland for supplies or a funeral or something?"

"Or maybe they just figure we've come a long way and they're letting us rest."

Mark got out the binoculars and looked around. "Ah, the island over there has a couple long boats and I see people walking on the beach. Oh, and there's a long boat coming our way." Sure enough, five men from the village came over to let us know that we had anchored near the cemetery, not the village.

"This island has too many mosquitoes. This is where our dead are buried," one man explained. Oops - definitely the wrong place. We apologized and invited the guys aboard for coffee. They were thrilled to have been asked, and their curious eyes darted around like pinballs, trying to see and understand so much they'd never seen before. Four of the guys rode with us as we lifted anchor and the other man led us to the right anchoring spot in their long boat. I could see that the men riding with us were trying to figure all the instruments out, so as I sat at the helm, I explained what each dial and digital reading represented. When we set the anchor I explained

why Elizabeth was calling out the anchor alarm distances and how we had to ensure the anchor was not dragging at all before turning off the engines. The anchor alarm on our AIS unit has alerted us on other occasions when we the anchor had lost its holding or even once when the mooring line broke free. We don't ever anchor without setting it and it has saved us many times.

Once safely set, we enjoyed a few cookies before heading in to meet the rest of the people living here, about 300 in all. Children lined the beach, waving anxiously and giggling shyly. Their faces and features were reminiscent of the Polynesian people, and I learned later that these people's ancestors were in fact Polynesian, rather than Melanesian or Micronesian. We did our typical introductions, and heard our names whispered amongst the kids and passing adults as we walked through the village. Our guide brought us to see the school and meet Chief Siwa. Gradually, the kids got braver and braver, and eventually they were pushing and shoving to get a better view or take a chance at asking a question.

Mark and our kids were ahead of me, and I was soon engulfed with a crowd of intrigued little ones with lots of questions. "Where you from?" "What your name is?" "What your son's name is?"

I managed to answer and then shoot a few questions back at them. "Where is your school? Who is your teacher? Do you like to fish? How old are you?" They were thrilled to ask and answer, so excited to share with their new guest. One boy seemed to be the spokesman of the group, with well-spoken English and a personality that would put any emcee to shame. He trotted along beside me, basking in the attention and shushing anyone who spoke over him.

After walking around the small island, we came to a place with log benches and rested a bit. The crowd of children was very careful to keep a path open so that I could get the breeze from the sea. Obviously one of the parents had reprimanded them for crowding me and in their own words had told the kids to give me some "breathing room". A green coconut was cut and handed to me to drink, and all the children stared as I lifted the huge nut to my mouth and took a big swig.

"Is sweet?" they asked, making sure I was satisfied with my refreshment. I nodded as I wiped the dripping coconut water from my chin.

They weren't quite sure what to do with me. And their nervous excitement led to a lot of noise - shushing and giggling. I decided singing might be just the thing to quiet them down, and began to sing Jesus Loves Me. Within the first few notes, their smiling faces turned toward me and their voices joined mine in the familiar tune. After that, it was a full sing-a-long, as I mentally rifled through my rolodex of children's songs to find more that they knew. Old Mac Donald, Deep and Wide, Jesus Loves the Little Children, Months of the Year Song, Days of the Week, and on and on it went until my voice was nearly gone. But, oh, what a beautiful moment it was to sit among all their sweet faces and sing together. I made sure to look into each set of eyes and show them how special they were. I could already tell, this place would wiggle its way into my heart in no time and I didn't want to give one thought to how hard this goodbye was going to be.

More on the Mortlocks adventures from their blog:

<http://svfieldtrip.blogspot.com/search/label/Papua%20New%20Guinea>

**Birding & Diving:** 04 42.4S 156 56E We moved to the small island, called bird island, in the northern part of the atoll. It is beautiful here with thousands of birds that nest on this island. We

did a very nice drift snorkel in the pass, and will do some diving today. This morning is also beautiful, with mostly sunny skies as the sun pops up.

The weather has been excellent. Sunny skies, light winds and some great diving. We logged three dives yesterday and about 2 hours of spear fishing. The kids played for hours on the sand spits near this anchorage and also had a great day. Today we will do some more diving, and get ready to leave for the next island. Still waiting for the winds to pick up, so that is our biggest item at this point. All well aboard.

### **3.4 Woodlark & Laughlan (Budi Budi) Islands**

**Wikipedia – 2016 – Woodlark Island:** Woodlark Island is also called Woodlark or Woodlarks by English language speakers. It is called Murua by the inhabitants of some other islands in the province. The wider Woodlark Islands group also consists of Madau and Nusam to the west, Nubara to the east, and the Marshall Bennett group to the southwest.



An Italian missionary order of Catholic clergy, the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions (P.I.M.E.), sent five priests and two brothers to Woodlark Island in 1852. Giovanni Battista (John) Mazzucconi was killed there in 1855 by an islander called Avicoar who opposed the missionaries and their religion.

Operation Chronicle was the name given to the landing of Allied forces on Woodlark Island and Kiriwina on June 30, 1943, during World War II. Within a few months of the landing U.S. Navy

Seabees had constructed a major airbase at Guasopa Bay, known as Woodlark Airfield (later Guasopa Airport).

Woodlark Island has had a long history of gold mining dating back to the late 1800s with records showing an estimated pre-World War II gold production, including alluvial sources, of about 220,000 ounces of gold. The island has been extensively logged for ebony which has always been an important cash economy to the communities on the island since the 1970s. Modern gold exploration was initiated on Woodlark Island in 1962 with the Bureau of Mineral Resources undertaking surface geochemistry, limited geophysics and diamond drilling during 1962 and 1963 at Kulumadau.

#### **3.4.1 Budi Budi**

**Obiwan – Oct 2022:** Anchorage **9° 17,130'S 153° 40,746'E**

This atoll will remain in our hearts forever.

The landscape is amazing, the village is big and nice, people are very welcoming.

We stayed for 5 days and made friendships with many locals.

All day long canoes came to our boat asking for goods and offering, coconuts, papaya, bananas, lemons, flowers necklaces.

We offered, lollypops for children, hook, fishing lines, AA batteries, tshirt, and we gave them everything we had onboard that could help.

What they need:

Diving masks

Childrens clothes

Adults clothes (not only t-shirts but trousers, underwear, skirts etc)

Biro (Pens)

Exercise books

Vocabulary

Books

AA batteries

Pain killers

**Yawana – 2014 – Budi Budi:** A good stop over between PNG & the Solomons. This is a very isolated place. You cannot clear in or out but it is advisable to pay a visit to the chief and the ward recorder and give them your details. The people here are very isolated and welcome any trade goods you can bring. Anything at all!

**Totem – 2012 – Budi Budi Atoll:** Budi Budi was only going to be a short stopover, but when we finally had good weather to leave, our weeklong stay felt too short. With an excellent anchorage, beautiful reefs, and very friendly people—it should be on more “must-see” stops in Papua New Guinea.

This jewel of an atoll gets few visitors, lying just far enough from the Louisiades that most cruising boats doing a circuit of those islands from Australia may not bother with the overnight trip north. It is on a path back to Australia from the Solomons, or for boats like us, a stopover point heading north and west through Papua New Guinea. From a local perspective, it is the equivalent of the back of beyond- the most distant outpost of Milne Bay Province.

It's small: only about three miles in diameter, two of the seven islands have residents- about 300 total. This must make their unique Budibud language one of the smallest living languages spoken. I thought there might be some similarities with the Misima dialect we had learned at islands just south of here, but so far have found only one word with any similarity- “waga,” a generic term for boat.

Both our new Navionics and old CMap charts were surprisingly accurate here. The atoll entrance at the northwest side was wide, and while we had excellent conditions, would be quite straightforward to enter with poor light by splitting the difference between the sand cay and the northern most island. There are a few large reefs inside, but reasonably charted as well, and anchorage throughout most of the area inside is a matter of finding your depth and then dropping the anchor into sand.

When we first arrived, we went ashore to meet Chief William and bring him a few token gifts: some fabric for his wife. He wasn't shy about asking for more things from us later, but I think we have become somewhat inured by the Louisiades. At the same time, he was very generous with us: he put on a big feed the third day we were there, and wanted to host another on our last night. Besides, we are the freaks showing up in our spaceships loaded with crazy abundance, but he is the one giving openly from the little that he has available. We try to find a balance.

Our feast on shore was complete with a chorus of singing by the village children “for our entertainment” while we ate. The food was simple but good: our first taste of sago (I thought it was a tough coconut bread until corrected), chicken and greens in coconut milk, a fish (brought in by another cruiser), boiled sweet potatoes, bananas, and papaya (yes, boiled papaya).

Most of the population is on the largest island to the south, but one extended family make up twenty odd residents on an eastern islet. Chief William’s brother (really, his cousin- they share a grandmother), Tau, and Tau’s family occupy the smaller island- they are respectively the senior members of the community, with William taking the title of chief. Tau stood in for the pastor, who was away in Woodlark, and just like Panapompom we were put into a receiving line afterwards. He and his wife Elsie and passed many hours on Totem: teaching to us about the islands and their community, and mastering Fruit Ninja on the iPad. I’m pretty sure that’s an unfair cultural exchange, but we had a lot of fun.

Our first clue to a temporary skew toward women and children came at church. The sand-floor open air chapel is a wood frame with open sides and a coconut frond roof. The children stayed with the island kids in “Sunday School”, under a tree outside, while the adults sat under the palm thatch: women on the right hand side, and men to the left (dimdims excepted; we were ushered uniformly to a pandanus mat brought for us at the very front). While the women’s side held a few dozen attendees, barely a half dozen men sat on the left. It turns out that they were all off at Woodlark Island- about 60 miles away- which is home to a number of Budi Budi families.

We learn that the families on Woodlark Island the community at home by facilitating trading, keeping gardens in the better soil, and housing the handful of children who continue schooling beyond year 6. They help bring fish, mats and pigs from the atoll to the market, and trade for items that can’t be sourced in the atoll: betel nut and lime, sago and yams, material to make clothes. Little of this involves cash transactions.

The only person growing copra is Chief William. The pastor tells me everyone else is using all their coconuts to meet their own needs. They are a staple food, a primary water source, and fodder for the pigs, chickens, and probably dogs we see. But copra doesn’t earn much: Budi Budi’s primary access to cash is from shark finning. It’s extremely sad, but who are we to lecture? It is the only meaningful way they have to earn currency. Shark lines are set up just outside the reef, and men were eager to trade with us for larger hooks to bait for it. This catch is brought to Alotau, although I’m not sure exactly how it makes financial sense. A community powerboat was purchased this year, the m/v Kali Katu- a play on kali katu’ai, “thank you” in Budibud, to ferry the fins. But it takes four barrels of fuel just to get to Alotau, and at PNG prices, that needs an awful lot of shark fins to be economical. As in other places, it is unlikely that any part of the shark is kept for use besides the fin, the waste adding to the tragedy.

We snorkeled over reefs in a few different parts of the island, and found stunning formations: trenches and hidden canyons of colorful corals, running with fingers full of brilliant fish. But we didn’t see a single shark, and there were only a few larger fish- nothing we could take. It’s not healthy. I don’t think locals draw the connection between finning and the decline of the reef. And even if it was clear, would the choices be any different? They have chickens and pigs, and don’t need fish for protein- but they do need cash to pay for their children to go to school, and to supply other needs.

There are 70 students in the island school. Two teachers were posted there by the government, but one of them never returned from a trip home during the term break so there is the lone headmaster to cover all six years of schooling. He was educated in Misima and Alotau, but doesn't know Budibud, so instruction is in English. As elsewhere, school is from 8 to 12 with a recess halfway through. I cannot imagine how daunting this man's task is.

One of the first people we meet is Dorcas; she and her husband Moses are pastors. Originally from Fergusson, she's one of the handful here who aren't from Budi Budi: her husband was born here and the United Church has posted them here for a few years. Dorcas' good English and warm personality make her an ideal guide. Over two different days, she patiently spends hours teaching us how to weave mats. That lesson almost feels secondary to the unexpected benefit of time with her learning more about the place we find ourselves.

It's Dorcas who unravels the stories of families split between the atoll and the Woodlark settlement, laughs with us about the girls who don't want to learn how to weave, and tells us more about bagi- the shell necklaces used for currency.

Two of our compadres in the anchorage bought small drums from Tau's family. As part of the transaction, the drums would be demonstrated and accompanied by traditional songs and dancing. Sign me up! After we arrived for the performance, I was ushered back where the women were getting ready: painting their faces with black streaks of soot dotted with a white paste from coconut meat, weaving flower garlands for their neck and hair, donning skirts from finely shredded palm fronds. Last of all, the shirts came off. Although topless living is traditional, it doesn't mesh with the standards for modesty that missionaries have imposed. A young woman participating carefully arranges plumeria leis across her breasts, and Elsie has compromised by sewing palms onto her bra, but it's all done with a lot of giggling and playing around. The drumming and singing are done entirely by men, who stand together while the women and girls shuffle step around them in a slow circle. The song is about black magic, an incantation to protect the newly deceased from being taken by evil spirits.

Sitting in the cockpit on our last evening, I talk to the girls--almost women--who have paddled out once more. We eat sweet little bananas from the ridiculously large stem hanging under Totem's solar arch, while they tell me which of Budi Budi's clans they come from. Flying fox, shark, crocodile, sea eagle- all four are represented. Their dugout has fragrant leis and a basket of fruit. We arrange a last trade, and it's hard not to wonder. We idealize the simple life, and theirs is about as simple as it comes, but what would they choose?

<http://www.sailingtotem.com/2012/10/idyllic-week-in-budi-budi-atoll.html>

**Anui – October 2011 - Lachlan Island / Budibudi:** From Kokopo and Rabaul we headed South to Budibudi (known on the chart as the Lachlan Islands) where the trading began in earnest. Our three boats were surrounded by canoes from dawn til dusk, plying a few vegetables, coconuts, fresh crayfish, some carvings or the famous bagi (more of them in a minute). In exchange, we gave rice, sugar, noodles, clothing, fish line and hooks. The fresh produce was not plentiful, as these islands are mainly sand, with little good soil. The locals have to sail by canoe to the Woodlark Islands to grow vegetables, often being away for 6 months at a time. Scott picked up some carved paddles, which were in use until we traded for them!

And the bagi. Bagi is the shell money traditionally and currently used in PNG. It is formed from shells gathered from the reef and then shaped by hand into small coral-coloured discs that



are threaded onto rope along with decorative shells and seeds. Bagie are still used for purchasing brides, livestock (yes, I did find it hard to write that, but that's the way it is) and other items between the islands. Each length of bagie has a specific value. I traded for dozens of them, most of which I modified into long necklaces, but a couple of which we kept in their traditional form. Seth has a very cool bagie of his own, after a man came to trade and accidentally dropped his necklace into the water. Seth dived and found it and the man insisted on giving it to him – so kind, as the bagie are a very valuable item.

In Budibudi we were visited by the two chiefs, brothers Tau and William. The usual giving of gifts took place – as we went South the chiefs' expectations about how many gifts they should receive appeared to increase! We would present pretty bowls, cloths, soap & sugar for their wives and rope, fishing tackle and t-shirts for the chiefs. We took supplies into the school, including the requested medical kit to treat the children's tropical ulcers and skin infections. This didn't stop Chief William sending out a long shopping list of items just before we left – we politely declined.

**Chasse Spleen – June 2009:** After 6 months in the Solomon Islands, we resume our travels heading for Papua New Guinea. Although we have not cleared with local authorities yet, we stop in Budi Budi atoll which is located very conveniently, half way between Ghizo and Milne Bay.

We arrive in clear weather and the combination of all shades of blue water, pristine islets surrounded by white sandy beaches, reminds of both Tuamotus (French Polynesia) and San Blas Islands (Panama).

Indeed we have found a little paradise. This is the most remote place we have been in since we started our journey as well as one of the most welcoming. It is needless to say that we will not stay here for a week as initially planned but for over a month! Bad weather towards the end of our stay gives us a good excuse to enjoy the premises a bit longer.

Every morning we are greeted by pods of bottlenose and spinner dolphins swimming around the boat. As we arrive to the villages we are welcomed by dozens of kids and adults alike, all smiles. The two villages are just beautiful. There are roughly 300 inhabitants (a mix of Polynesian and Melanesian blood) living in two of the islets. The huts are built on the sand and are made of pandanus and palm trees. The main means of transportation between the islands are wooden outrigger wooden some with "patchwork" sails made of any material that could take the wind (including bin or rice bags).

The appearance of the villages has probably not changed much in the past 200 years. There is no running water, no mean of communication, no electricity (not even a solar panel), no medical aid, no shop, and no use of money. There is a primary school but teachers have to volunteer to come to Budi Budi which to PNG standards is very isolated. The school is mostly taught in English although many adults do not speak English (Education reach the Island in the early 80's, few years after PNG independence).

The first island with the a few western "civilisation" basics is Woodlark which separated from Budi Budi by 50 nautical miles of uncharted coral reefs.

As usual our boys are surrounded by friends and having a hell of time, swimming, jumping in the water, having nice canoe rides or making fires. It is a fight every day to bring them back on Chasse Spleen to the delight of the villagers who find this very funny. We always try to be back

on the boat before dawn to avoid any risk of mosquito bites unless we have appropriate protection (Malaria is a big problem here.) The locals clearly enjoy the boys' company and it is a welcome break for us to organise some activities with Chief Tao and not worry about the monsters.

Our relations with the villagers are great but one has to say that the arrival of Chasse Spleen offers an opportunity to find clothes, rice, hooks, fishing lines, batteries, rubber of the spear guns, fishing net. The villagers trade these goods for crayfish, coconut crabs, bananas, papayas, sweet potatoes, eggs or bush lime or beautiful bags made of pandanus. We are escorted by Chief Tao and his family to the church, (the biggest hut of the main islands) and this is the opportunity to give them a few books and pens that are needed for Sunday religious school. We also organise very popular video sessions with the boys' portable DVD player. 35 persons from all generations are sitting together watching the Lion King. This is quite an amazing experience.

Marc offers his McGyver's services, i.e. repairs fins, the leaks in their rain-water tank, torches, radio as well as gives lecture on outboard maintenance.

The villagers mostly live from local resources such as fish, shells, clams, crayfish, chicken and pigs. Coconuts are used for every meal as a sauce, oil or as main course. They also have some vegetables and fruits. We still amazed by their ingenuity to grow taro or sweet potatoes in an extremely poor soil consisting mostly of coral and sand.

For the past 3 years, The men have collected "beche de mer" (sea cucumbers) for the Chinese. This has provided them with a new source of income and modern dinghies with outboards. They use this money to buy gasoline (outrageously expensive), rice, batteries, flour and other goods. The "beches de mer" season only lasts 6 months and they try to collect as many as possible before trade winds settle. This is a fairly dangerous activity, the main spot being 25 nautical miles out from the atoll in open sea, in fairly shallow water. This can be very rough when bad weather arises. In fact they lost a teenager on their last expedition and recovered him 8 hours later in the dark. We will hear few weeks later that a ban on beche de mer harvesting will be implemented as of October in all PNG. It will be very tough for our friends as the harvesting was their only source of money. To give up the little comfort brought by this source of cash (clothes, rice, oil, tobacco, outboard engine) will be hard for this people. Furthermore they have stopped building the large sailing canoes to travel to Alotau or Woodlark and we are not too sure how they will communicate with the outside world.

We are also invited by both chief for "kaikai", first Tao and Elsie prepare us a chicken with local delicacies, the chicken taste great although has been training for the marathon! A few days later, as Marc hinted that the local pigs look very healthy, Chief William orders to kill the pig for us and invite us for dinner. The meal is absolutely delicious. The pig has been cooking all afternoon with hot stones recovered by sand (the Polynesian way). They also prepared some papayas stuffed with coconut and coconut rice. We are treated like pashas. Noticing how much we enjoy our dinner, William prepares us a doggy bag with some pieces of pig. During our stay in Budi Budi, every time a pig is killed he will ensure that we get a few pieces for our dinner.

We naturally invite both chiefs on Chasse Spleen for kaikai, generally offering pasta with sauce as an introduction to "European cuisine". We also try to challenge them on some desserts with fruit tarts made with canned European fruits (pears) which they have never tried before. Our relation with both chiefs is very cordial and Marc goes fishing with Tao on a regular basis. He

also brings the villagers giant barracudas (the biggest he ever caught) on a few occasions. They have never seen a "dim dim" bringing back big fishes!

Snorkelling in the area is not great mostly as a result of sand affecting the visibility. We however enjoy major shell hunts with the boys walking for hours on the reef to improve the quality of our collection. Among other activities, one evening Marc goes to pick up crayfishes with Tao. Although the conditions are poor (very strong currents) they managed to pick up 6 massive creatures within one hour. According to Tao, this was a very poor result! We also organise a coconut crab hunt with Tao and his wife Elsie. We leave in the canoes for a nearby island. The result is limited but we have a lot of fun searching in any hole or tree for the crabs. We resume our campaign the next day on another island and Tao spots a hole on the ground, where the beast is resting! Although tied up and left in a bucket on the deck, the creature manages to escape in the night as we are woken up by strange steps. We find that the crab travel from the bow to the stern of Chasse Spleen and was just about to fall on our head through the hatch. This could have proved quite painful! We rush to cook the beast and prepare ourselves for a great dinner!

On Sunday after church, the whole village sits outside under the trees. It is time for open talks or to raise any issues with the daily life. We are invited by both chiefs to stay. After the men have their smoke (Marc has brought half cigars for William and Tao), we head for a casual and unplanned kaikai (pumpkin and dumplings made of flour and coconut) at Chief Williams' place. This is one of the highlights of our stay, sharing some nice stories about the mystic rock between Budi Budi and Woodlark. We understand that the accident with the boy is the consequence of teenagers misbehaving few days earlier on the rock, and not showing enough respect to the spirits.

Williams also explains in details the kula ring which was in the past the inter islands trade route. The ring covers all Milne Bay Province from the Louisiades, Samarai, d'Entrecasteaux, Woodlark to Budi Budi. The large outrigger sailing canoes were visiting other islands of the ring with Bagis hanging at the bow as a sign of peace and trade willingness (Bagis are special necklaces made of shells equivalent to money or more precisely a bill of debt). The bagi would be negotiated against goods, land and wife. Budi Budi was the northern end of the kula ring and was renowned for pigs, grass skirts and canoes. Williams showed us one of his bagis which still nowadays represents substantial value.

This nice gathering is also the perfect occasion for Marc to chew some bettle nut with them (nicknamed PNG gum). The taste is apparently not great and I have never seen Marc spitting so much within a few minutes. Fortunately he did not chew it long enough for his teeth and mouth to become bright red, which is usually not a pretty sight!

After a month in Budi Budi and many unforgettable experiences we need to head to the mainland, Samarai and Alotau to officialise our entry in Papua New Guinea. We leave Budi Budi with regret, but will make sure we will return and bring back some goodies to our friends.

Maranatha – Oct 2006 – Boi Boi (Woodlark Island): Anchorage Waypoint: (none given)

The approach to this anchorage follows the channel marked on the chart which is reasonably accurate. Anchor in about nine metres of water.

### 3.5 Trobriands

**2XS – September 2016 – Kadalawa Point, Kiriwina:** 08-35.290 S / 151-00.911 E 4.5m  
(Note, this waypoint does not seem to plot in the right place)

Another long-seeming passage from New Britain to the Trobriand Islands...Long-seeming because...no autopilot, no moon... But we managed OK.

No idea when we will ever get internet connection again...

**2XS – September 2016 – Losuia Village:** We spent two nights and a day rocking and rolling in wind and rain near Losuia, which is apparently the largest settlement on the Trobriands. Too tired to care much that it was raining and windy...and there was no hope of getting anywhere near the township. We felt as if we were anchored way out at sea – it is all very shallow and it would have been a big trip in the dinghy, battling against lively waves, to get to shore. So...we just rocked and rolled on the waves.

**2XS – September 2016 – Kaduage Village, Kaileuna Island:** 08-30.338 S / 150-55.474 E 5m

So on we went to Kaileuna Island, where we had a very nice anchorage, sheltered within a reef, off Kaduage Village. They never ever have yachts visiting, and the entire village was in an uproar. On our first day we had over 150 visitors...and just about as many the second day. We were very welcoming, if slightly overwhelmed...they all got a bracelet, and something to eat – a biscuit, or popcorn. And they all got to listen to music played loudly on our wonderful little Bose bluetooth speaker.

In return they brought us masses of vegetables. We have enough local root veggies – great stodgy yams and taro (they really are horrid but very filling) – to feed an army. Plus a mountain of beans, a dozen coconuts, a few tomatoes, and four very welcome pumpkins and two enormous and very unripe pamplemousse. It was all a bit like the sorcerer's apprentice – VERY hard to stem the tide! Everyone got something in exchange for their contribution– school books with pencil and sharpeners, clothes, rice, sugar, soap.

And we now know Kaileuna Island as – The **Island of Thieves** because they stole so much! It is very hard to supervise so many people...and not polite, either... So...they took Pete's thongs, my sunglasses, one head torch, my on-deck laundry detergent, this and that sundry item, from under our noses. And a few enterprising young men found a way to open our bedroom hatch and drag out our bedsheets and all of the clothes I had on the bench – two silk dresses from Vietnam, much loved, and my favourite (slightly ragged...pink sailing dress.) I actually caught them in the act; I went downstairs and saw one of them leaning in gently dragging my pink cashmere shawl out through the hatch. I went up and slammed the window locked it, and he immediately scampered back up to the cockpit to sit innocently with the others. I didn't realise he had already taken all of those other things from the bed and the bench...obviously he and his friends had lined up a canoe right next to the boat so they could just drop everything overboard; I am NOT quick on the uptake!

Fortunately we had a very nice experience doing a tour of the village. It was just fascinating, and we did not yet know how much had been stolen – we did know John had taken my sunglasses, because when I asked him he said he would bring them back, very sorry... (How

did I know this particular John had them?? Well...he posed for his photograph with them prominently perched on his forehead....)

Two young men took charge of the tour – Coral Mono, from Losuia, and Peter Gigi, son of the village chief. It was a fabulous village, with four deep pools near the beach, each with spring water – one for men to bathe, one for women, one for drinking water, one for clothes washing.

We met Lydia, the community nurse, who said that actually the water is tainted and that a lot of people get sick...good thing I didn't accept the invitation to have a nice cool drink!

Coral and Peter took me to the house of a Very Important Person in the village, an ancient wisened man, who came out with an elaborate neckpiece. He charged 5 kinas to have his photo taken. I also took a photo of his revered old wife...(I later found out that these venerable ancient people are all of 52 years old...) Pete arrived in the village later than I did – he had gone back to the boat to shout at three boys who had clambered aboard in our absence. He arrived with a swarm of children following, shouting, laughing, cheering. They followed us everywhere; Peter and Coral, our self-appointed guides, were very cross. They would grab the arm of a small boy and hurl him across the mud, or the grass, snarling, "Just fuck away, you boys!!" The boys, very sensibly, paid no attention to them at all.

On our way back to the dinghy we visited the venerable ancient elder again and he gave Pete an amazing talismanic necklace thingy. It looks very nice hanging on the inner wall of 2XS, near Pete's bark painting from Arnhem Land.

I am so glad we had such a fabulous and interesting visit to the village, because soon after we got back to the boat we realised that...our beloved Bose minispeaker was gone. Peter and Coral were suitably horrified, and they promised to get it back for us.

This morning they arrived before 7am...MUCH too early. They had my white sunglasses, and Pete's thongs, retrieved from John, but they must have found a moment to take my very favourite tortoiseshell glasses and pop them in their bag instead...They asked me what they should do if they found the Bose speaker, and I said that they could keep it but that it would be of no use to anyone without a charger...And just after they had left I noticed that – aha! – the charger was gone...The list of things they took grows day by day...I reach for my stash of biros and – gone. Ditto Pete's iPod, my spare earphones, our Digicel phone top-up cards (worth 65 kina, a lot of money!)

We are totes devo re all of this. Why did I let this happened, this morning, when I already knew that Kaduage Village is the Village Of Thieves?? Well...in my defence, Pete had gone back to bed, hoping that this would be a signal for Peter and Coral to, in their own words, fuck away. And I was very dopy...I had gone to bed at 6pm full of strong painkillers and have spent the day recovering.

I am heartily sick of the thievery...in fact I now find it hard to sleep; our erstwhile Kaduage friends Peter Gigi and Coral Mono ended up giving me the willies. They became more and more aggressive with me, when Pete had gone back to bed, complaining bitterly that we had given them "nothing." Well...nothing included a very nice portfolio of portrait photos nicely laminated; hats; National Geographic magazines, food, music, party time, company...plus all of the things they had stashed into their bags while I was assiduously doing the washing on deck.

### 3.5.1 Losuia

**Free Bird – January 2015:** We went through Dawson Strait between Normanby and Fergusson Islands then up outside the reef towards the Trobriands. There is a passage inside the reef but we chose an overnigher wide of the Amphlett group and then went in a pass in the outer reef the next day several miles south of Vakuta Is. near Arinai Islet at about 09°00/151°06.8 (I think) then up the channel to Kiriwina and anchored off Boli Pt.

OpenCPN was very inaccurate in Sewa Bay (Normanby Island) but very accurate inside the reef up to Kiriwina oddly.

We were approached by some locals the next day who assured us we could get into Losuia (The Station, as it's called locally) which looks impossible on the chart we had. One of them, Pascal Asera, became our guide for the time we were there and together we sounded the channel from the dinghy. On the next tide his brother piloted us in and we anchored off the town near 08°32.6/151°00 which looks pretty shabby but is very friendly. Pascal's father Benjamin lives here. The Trobes have a very traditional society and I was introduced to a tribal chief on my first visit and was then assured by Pascal that the boat would be safe as I was now under his protection. I later met the high chief and this assurance was repeated. When meeting elders and chiefs a gift of a cigarette or 2 is expected and any other small item will be appreciated if you feel like it. The Trobriands are famous for wood carvings and we traded for many. Bigger, high quality items like the famous walking sticks will require cash as well.

When we left we took Pascal back to his home on Kailuena Island and were set to proceed to Tuma Is and the surrounding area, which the locals said was very nice, but the next morning a late spell of S.E. trade winds had me changing plan to a sail toward New Britain and Rabaul instead.

**Yawana – 2015:** These islands offer excellent cruising, friendly people, a little pushy sometimes but no crime. Take trade goods as supplies are limited on outer islands.

**Westward II – Nov 2010:** We departed the friendly Marshall Bennet Islands and headed for the Trobriand Islands. Again, outside of the main island, visiting yachts were few and far between.

We arrived at Vakuta, in company with Dragonfly and Gambori, coming in through Kashilmaka or 'boat passage'. The entrance was very shallow with depths down to 2.2m.

There is a small village near the passage on Kiriwina Island, Gilibwa Village, and a few canoes soon paddled out.

Later, we went ashore to visit. So far I had resisted the temptation to trade for eggs as you just don't know how fresh they are. I finally weakened as this lady kept holding these eggs in front of me, and she really wanted some rice, so we exchanged rice for ½ dozen eggs. For dinner, I cooked Nasi Goreng with crayfish and the pièce-de-résistance was to be a poached egg. How good is that? Well, the first 5 I cracked had little chickens inside and the sixth finally a good egg. But by then I couldn't even look at an egg, so they all went overboard, poached eggs taken off the menu for the foreseeable future!

The language has changed from Woodlark and surrounding islands so are again learning the basic words, this time for the Trobriand language, slow going as very few people speak English, and very little Pidgin which surprised us as we thought it would be much more prevalent. Also we were told that hardly any children from the village attend school.

Our next stop was Yaga Island where we anchored in sand in four metres of water. An old fisherman paddled over in his canoe, didn't speak much English, but had crayfish and indicated he wanted rice or shirt, we gave him both. He was a shark fisherman and they were smoking their catch ashore.

From here we travelled to Losuia on Kiriwina Island. Here, along with Dragonfly and Gambori, we joined another couple of yachts at anchor. Losuia is a large town, grubby looking, with old houses cheaply constructed – brick, asbestos, and wooden huts. There are some canteen type stores with basic food, and even alcohol, albeit expensive.

Here the canoes were relentless, just wanting to sell carvings, carvings, and more carvings. Generally very good quality, we bought a couple of small pieces, the sales strategy of persistence paying off. We went ashore, leaving the dinghy tied to the jetty among the banana boats and canoes. People everywhere, holding out carvings to us constantly. We later heard that a cruise ship had been here last week with over 100 passengers.

We visited the local market and as a result of the rain squalls over the last few days, it was very muddy. We bought some fruit and veges, some from vendors set up on the tables under the market roof, and some from vendors outside, with both them and their produce sitting in the mud.

All along the path to and on the jetty, there were more vendors selling seafood – smoked fish, fresh fish, smoked crayfish, smoked turtle, live turtle, and other items unidentifiable - and of course carvings.

Here is the first time we had to really keep an eye on the canoes and their occupants. We had nothing go missing; however a couple of other boats had a few items disappear from deck. One girl found her sunglasses at the market, for sale.

Kids will be kids though and we had a constant supply around the boat, just having fun, playing in the dinghy, and on the swim platform, trying to sneak on board when they thought Stephen wasn't looking (as he had told them they could only stand on the swim platform). Constantly peering in the windows, and providing the skipper with much assistance as he fixed the anchor winch.

With the anchor winch fixed we packed up and headed out in the afternoon, wanting a rising tide to get out through the shallow channel, got down to 1.9 metres, geez! Another yacht that came out later got stuck and didn't float again until the morning.

We anchored nearby at Boli Point, nice and peaceful after Losuia. We continued the next day to Boimaga Island 15nm away, again no village and no canoes. The anchorage became a little rollie with a northerly wind change so we moved to Tuma Island, only a couple of miles away and more protected. Here we relaxed, fished, and prepared some passage meals for our next big sail.

Here are our anchorage waypoints for the Trobriands, Nov 2010:

Vakuta Island	08.48.360'S	151.07.997'E	shallow entrance and anchorage
Yaga Island	08.44.211'S	150.57.869'E	
Losuia, Kiriwina Island	08.32.955'S	151.04.008'E	very shallow channel entrance

Boli Point, Kiriwina Island	08.33.438'S	151.01.088'E	
Boimaga Island	08.25.256'S	150.53.215'E	rolly in northerly
Tuma Island	08.23.483'S	150.52.729'E	

**SSCA Bulletin – 1992 – Kitava Island:** Kitava is east of Kiriwina Isl. in the Trobriands. It is also a raised atoll about 200 feet high. UP the hill and into the bowl-like center lie three villages. We hiked to the first village, where the school was; they get a small tourist boat in every month or so and were quite used to Europeans...second village an hour further and were astounded how primitive they were. The whole village came out to meet us with various items for trade. We were totally surrounded. A lot of the people wore grass skirts or pandanus wraps and only one spoke English. We held court for an hour trading.

### **3.6 Bougainville and Buka**

**Noonsite from before 2018:** Buka Island offers extensive sheltered cruising along its west coast, but the east coast is cliff. As a reminder to take care, a freighter (now abandoned) hit the barrier reef just north of Matsungan Island in April 2010 after losing engine power.

Buka is still considered unsafe for cruising yachts, and if you are planning to visit be sure to find a reliable local who can boat-sit, if you plan to be off the boat for any length of time.

**Wikipedia – 2016:** Bougainville Island is the main island of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville of Papua New Guinea. This region is also known as Bougainville Province or the North Solomons. Its land area is 9,300 km<sup>2</sup>. The population of the province is 175,160 (2000 census), which includes the adjacent island of Buka and assorted outlying islands including the Carterets. Mount Balbi at 2,700m is the highest point. Although Bougainville Island is geographically part of the Solomon Islands archipelago, the state of Solomon Islands is not a part of Papua New Guinea.

Bougainville was first settled some 28,000 years ago by people from New Ireland. Three to four thousand years ago, Austronesian people arrived, bringing with them domesticated pigs, chickens, dogs and obsidian tools. The first European contact with Bougainville was in 1768, when the French explorer Louis de Bougainville arrived and named the main island for himself.

Germany laid claim to Bougainville in 1899, annexing it into German New Guinea. Christian missionaries arrived on the island in 1902.

During World War I, Australia occupied German New Guinea, including Bougainville. It became part of the Australian Territory of New Guinea under a League of Nations mandate in 1920.

In 1942, during World War II, Japan invaded the island, but allied forces launched the Bougainville campaign to regain control of the island in 1943. Following the war, the Territory of New Guinea, including Bougainville, returned to Australian control.

In 1949, the Territory of New Guinea, including Bougainville merged with the Australian Territory of Papua, forming the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, a United Nations Trust Territory under Australian administration.

On 9 September 1975, the Parliament of Australia passed the Papua New Guinea Independence Act 1975. The Act set 16 September 1975 as date of independence and



terminated all remaining sovereign and legislative powers of Australia over the territory. Bougainville became part of an independent Papua New Guinea, however, on 11 September 1975, in a failed bid for self-determination, Bougainville declared the Republic of the North Solomons. The republic failed to achieve any international recognition, and a settlement was reached in August 1976. Bougainville was then absorbed politically into Papua New Guinea with increased self-governance powers.

Between 1988 and 1998, civil war on the island claimed over 15,000 lives. The Peace talks brokered by New Zealand began in 1997, leading to autonomy for the island. A multinational Peace Monitoring Group (PMG) under Australian leadership was deployed. In 2001, a peace agreement was signed including promise of a referendum on independence from PNG.

Bougainville is the largest island in the Solomon Islands archipelago. It is part of the Solomon Islands rain forests ecoregion. Bougainville and the nearby island of Buka are a single landmass separated by a deep 300-metre-wide strait. The island is 9000 square kilometres, and there are several active, dormant or inactive volcanoes which rise to 2400m. Mount Bagana in the north central part of Bougainville is conspicuously active, spewing out smoke that is visible many kilometres distant. Earthquakes are frequent, but cause little damage.

Buka is a relatively flat island some 52 kilometres (32 miles) long in the north-south axis, and up to 18 kilometres (11 miles) wide in the west-east axis. It is separated from Bougainville by the Buka Passage, a narrow, deep and very fast flowing tidal channel about 200 metres (660 feet) wide. The east coast is the windward side for most of the year, and is characterized by a coastal cliff that rises close to the ocean, leaving only a narrow and often rocky beach. A coral reef rings the entire island, it is narrow on the east coast, which is battered by oceanic winds and large waves; it spreads out into lagoons on the west coast.

### **3.6.1 Queen Corola Harbor, Buka Island**

**Soggy Paws – Mar 2018:** We got conflicting information about whether it was wise to make any stops at Buka. Rod at the Rabaul Yacht Club was adamant that we shouldn't stop anywhere at Buka or Bouganville. But we had accounts from Screensaver (below) indicating he didn't have any significant problems in Buka.

We had met an old guy in Kavieng who was born in the Queen Corola Harbor area, and who said his brother was a chief there, and it would be safe for us to stop. He pointed to the peninsula that forms the northern edge of QueenCarola Harbor.

So, when we arrived in the harbor in the early morning, we went to the northern part of the bay. We had searched the satellite pictures for signs of a village, but could only see a couple of houses. The major town in that area is Lontis, but it's on the north coast of Buka, quite a ways from the harbor.

Using binoculars, we found the houses we had seen on the sat pic, and anchored nearby, at 05-07.21 S / 154-32.08 E, in 25-30 ft. (watch for patch reefs on the way in).

Unfortunately, it was Sunday morning, and when we dinghied ashore, there was not a soul to be found, and it looked like only one family was living there. Since we weren't even sure we were in the right place, we opted to pick up anchor and proceed on south to Ramun Bay, near Buka Town. There were no canoes in sight in Queen Carola Harbor, but in the afternoon, going down the channel towards Ramun Bay, we passed a couple of villages, and it seemed every male in

the area was out in a canoe. They were quite excited as we passed them, threading our way carefully through the canoes. Some of the younger kids were chanting “lolly, lolly, lolly” as we sailed past, so of course we did NOT break out our lollies for such rude behavior.

**Screensaver – July 2017 – Queen Corola Harbor:** 05-10.206 S / 154-32.472 E Anchor in 13m Sand/mud, 2G. Some deliberation went into the path south from Nissan. A few stories abound regarding Buka and the passage between Buka and Bougainville.

In the ideal world one would go up/down the west coast of Buka because there is more to see and its protected by a navigable reef, and up/down the east coast of Bougainville for the same reasons. To do that means you really need to stop at Buka and go through the channel both of which generally seemed undesirable due to local people risks and current. Anyway we elected to give it a go.

As it happened the trip from Nissan wasn't too bad and I managed sail for a couple hours as apposed to motor sailing. Yaparua is a small island and no one really lives there which was part of the attraction figuring we would get a break from the endless canoes. However where we anchored was a prime fishing spot and we were surrounded at night by 20 or so Canoes fishing all with lights on, which in its own way looked quite cool and they were all nice enough.

### **3.6.2 Buka Town & Ramun Bay**

**Soggy Paws – March 2019 – Ramun Bay:** After a long motorsail in nearly windless conditions, from New Ireland and via Queen Corola Harbor, we spent a short overnight in Ramun Bay, anchoring at 05-24.49 S / 154-38.71 E. We had about a knot of current against us coming in the channel from the west (and some current against us motoring down the inside passage from Queen Corola). Anchorage was good—nice flat bottom at about 40 feet deep, and plenty of room for several boats.

In the middle of the night, we got a pretty good squall. Wind got up to about 30 knots in gusts, briefly. Some rain. But holding was good so we weren't worried.

There are two villages in the bay. One is apparent as you come in the bay, it's on your left hand side. The other is further in on the left, and not visible. You can see it easily on Google Earth. The kids from the first village go to school in the second village.

We had a few school kids visit us in canoes as the sun was setting. They had coconuts to trade, and they were asking for “biscuits and biros” (cookies/crackers, lollies, and pens for school). They were fairly nice and polite, and a few spoke good English.

We left at the crack of dawn the next morning. Careful coming and going as there are a few patch reefs in the east side of the bay.

**Screensaver – September 2018 – Clearing in at Buka:** I didn't want to go to Rabaul to clear in to PNG, and I knew I couldn't clear in in Kavieng, so Buka it was. The anchorage most talked about is between Sohana Island and Bougainville at 05 26.590 S / 154 40.203 E. But quite frankly its dangerous and I really don't like it. You are anchoring on rock, in at least 2 knot or more current and in these windy conditions, with 30 knots roaring down the south channel the waves stand up to at least 1m. If the waves are not there the banana boats whiz by a meter if your lucky from your boat.

I was not prepared to leave Screensaver unattended there, so in the end the officials agreed to come to me, if I bought the boat around to the Sohana anchorage. Seemed like a very good compromise, so they all came to Screensaver and I explained my story (stuck between the Solomons and Buka for a number of days waiting for weather) and all was accepted.

To this day I'm not sure that they didn't take my Solomon's entry paper work as my Solomon's exit clearance, even though its labelled entry and I told them that's what it was. I have a stamp in my passport from PNG Immigration but it has no time limit on it so, I'm really not sure how long I have, although on the form I did give them an exit date of 14th of November. The guys that came to the boat were all very nice and I couldn't have asked for anything more fair or reasonable.

A few other things came to light after when we were just chatting generally. They asked me why I did not stop at Arawa, i.e. Kieta to check-in. I explained I did not consider this a safe place, and told them of my earlier experience last year and this year. He tells me the war lords (his words) live there most of them, and they occasionally come here well armed fronting the politicians to get what they want from local government. Buka/Bougainville is planning to go to the polls to separate from PNG and has already started creating the political structure and the war lords are trying to get in.

I asked about this land owner thing, and they said any of the major towns and developed area's land ownership is by title as we are all used to, with boundaries. The old system of land ownership include a due care/caretaker ownership for the surrounding waters, which is especially true of the more remote places, but that does not mean they own the water or have any rights to charge anchorage fees.

**Screensaver – July 2017 - Buka Town, Ramun Bay:** 05 25.672 S / 154 38.671 E Anchor in 13m mud, 2G. Watusi and I had set off in the morning not intending to go very far, but we ended up coming down the west coast the whole way to the Buka Passage.

In the end the anchorages at the bottom of the protected reef area were getting a bit of swell so we pushed on to Ramun Bay on the SW coast of Buka.

We anchored in Ramun Bay to keep away from the Banana boat traffic whom are said to be driving fast & drunk and coming way too close, plus avoid the extreme current said to be running between Buka and Bougainville.

We had been going to get a Banana boat to take us to Buka, but in true PNG style that never happened. I ended up taking my boat to the "town anchorage" next to Sohano Island, so I could run back and forth in the dinghy.

Ramun Bay is much safer and quieter, so we went back there after our shopping. The locals there seemed very nice and clearly the rain was normal as this didn't stop them coming in force.

I did another run to Buka (6nm round trip) in the dinghy to get 22L of Diesel instead of the 22L of Petrol that magically appeared in the diesel container on Kim's return, plus hunt around for some other items.

Eventually the rain cleared and we headed for the Buka Passage. The tides here are only once per day and even though we got the tide wrong it was still not such a big deal running at about 2-3 knts against us for about 2nm.

**Screensaver – July 2017 – Buka Town Anchorage:** At Buka anchorage I had banana boats passing very close, very fast. I eventually pushed the boom all the way out one side with the ropes hanging down in the hope I would keep them off the boat a little bit.

The current at this anchorage was also running a good 2-3 knts, so in all, not an anchorage I would recommend. However I needed to try and get some supplies so reluctantly we anchored there and Kim and I got a Banana boat to the town. I left Kim in town after picking up a couple of heavy items and returned quickly to make sure Screensaver was ok. There is not a lot of shopping to be done here and it's not unusual for them to be out of diesel or LPG. The only place that refills LPG bottles was out of gas so its highly likely we will run out also before we can get a refill. Even though they use Ozy type connections here, refilling is not usual.

**Noonsite – 2013:** The best anchorage is between Sohano Island and Bougainville Island and is well sheltered from the trade winds (05-26.590S / 154-40.203E). The island is not labelled on C-map.

There are internet cafes in both Buka and Arawa. Though the reputation of Buka/Bouganville is not great, we had a good time here getting ready for our passage to Micronesia. We stayed over a week with no problems. Provisioning was not great here, but you can make do.

We made friends with the elderly and highly respected chief, and many other people, on the west side of Sohano Island, where we anchored. After we made enough friends, they looked after us and our boat.

### **3.6.3 Buka Passage / Bouganville Passage**

If travelling from Solomons to PNG, then Buka is a Port of Entry for PNG. The Buka Channel is between Buka Island and Bouganville Island.

Soggy Paws – Mar 2019: Neither WXTide nor TotalTides has a tide point for Buka. The nearest tide point is for “Soroken”, listed as being in the Solomon Islands in WXTide and listed as being in the Bismark Archipelago in Total Tides. I found a “Buka” entry online, however: <https://www.tideschart.com/Papua-New-Guinea/Bougainville/Buka/>

**US Sailing Directions, Pacific Islands – 2017 Edition:** Tidal currents, with a velocity of about 4 knots, are reported in Buka Passage. The flood current sets to the W and the ebb current sets to the E. The survey indicated a flood current of 6 knots and an ebb current of 4.5 knots.

A vessel drawing 6m or less should pass between the S coast of Buka Island and Madehas Island, taking care to clear the reefs extending from Madehas Island, then N of Minan Island, then NE through the passage proper. When traversing the passage proper, keep to the center of the fairway until open water is reached. The S approach channel to the passage's SW entrance requires local knowledge.

**Screensaver – July 2017 – Buka Passage:** The Buka Passage was OK, but I wouldn't want to do it with spring tides and wind against current--I can imagine it could get pretty nasty.

### **Noonsite 2013-2018:**

The easiest entrance is from the east. The **Buka Passage** can on rare occasions flow at up to 8kn, creating large standing waves when wind opposes tide. But the norm is anything between

1 and 3 knots of current. Best entrance is at slack water, but once through any waves near the channel marker posts, the passage is deep and easily navigable.

You can enter Buka from the west but this involves travelling past coral reefs and small islands.

Fishing vessels do come through this way. You can expect to be buzzed by lots of PMV boats as yachts stopping here are rare and the people are quite curious. Rather than take your dinghy to shore, simply wave down a PMV boat who will take you in for K2.

**Sophia – November 2012:** We're now in Buka in Papua New Guinea. It took us three nights and two days to get here, but all the time in sight of land. The Shortland Islands are only a few miles south of Bouganville (PNG), so in theory you could just day hop, but there's no customs in either the Shortland Islands nor in south Bouganville, so it's still a small passage to change country.

The passage was typical of the weather we have had in Solomon Islands, pretty light, but a bit of everything and lots and lots of lightening, thankfully all in the horizon, not near us. The wind was mostly on the forward quarter, which is great when it's very light, as we can actually move at a good speed, and it's not uncomfortable either. It's a fine balance though, and when the wind picks up, it's not so fun beating into it. We had 1/2 - 1 knot of current with us the first 24 hours, but halfway up the coast of Bouganville, it changed to being against us. The last night we were tacking into the wind and being pushed by the current away from Buka, very frustrating, but we managed to get there, even after some hours of heaving to.

**Buka Passage** can easily have 5-6 knots of current, so trying to time our arrival was important, but difficult, because we couldn't find any time table. OpenCPN did have one, and Phil estimated that morning arrival was OK, which was also what we'd prefer, so that we didn't have to stay the night, but could leave again the same afternoon. We ended up having about 1 knot of current against us, which was totally fine, but not what we expected. We just passed the passage again coming back from town (in a local boat) and it sure looked like there was a lot more current then, so it will be interesting when we leave a little later on.

So far people here are just as friendly as in Solomon Islands and people are actually slightly better dressed and many have backpacks etc, but then it's quite a big place also, much bigger than Gizo for example. Bouganville has quite a tumultuous history with civil war and mining problems (the two being related), but there's peace now and in 2020 there's an election to decide if Bouganville should be independent. All the land is owned by private people, nothing by the government, so somebody owns the land where the gold and copper mines are, and there are now ongoing negotiations about the rights to the land. So much potential in this land, but who is going to benefit is the million dollar question.

Like in Vanuatu and Solomons Islands, men must pay the father of the bride a pride price. This is very old customs and today speaking with one of the friendly locals (John) from the boat we caught a ride on, I suddenly realised why that is. I already knew that usually the wife goes to where the husband comes from. The parents are therefore paid a sort of compensation for losing their daughter.

These days it's mostly paid in cash, but there's also some traditional trading/goods involved. A typical bride price around here is 4-5000 kina (1 kina equals approximately 0.66 NZ\$), so it's quite a lot of money a man has got to save up to buy a bride, but he'll often also get help from

his parents. According to John it's much more expensive in Port Moresby though, there it's more like 50-60,000 kina.

We're now going to make our way north on the outside of New Ireland stopping at some of the small islands on our way to Kavieng, the next big port. Unfortunately we have a lot of miles to cover, almost 1000 miles, to get to Vanimo by the north coast of Guinea just before the border to Indonesia. From there we're going to hop north over equator to Palau, where we hope to spend Christmas, so we gotta get a move on and can't spend too much time exploring this big and interesting country. We're still in the transition period between the SE trades and NW monsoon, and hopefully we can make it (a lot of motoring is guaranteed) before we get too much headwind, but we'll have to wait and see.

We left Buka later in the afternoon after our morning arrival. A ton of big dinghies with big outboards were zipping across the harbour constantly and most of them wanted to get as close to us as possible to check us out. Their wake combined with the current made the anchorage quite unsettled and with a big population like that, raskols (PNG name for criminals/bandits) would be a possibility, so that's why we left. We had three knots of current with us as we left, so we did get the times fairly right after all.

**Endless Summer – 2011:** This is the only place they were up ALL NIGHT worried about locals. Internet access, provisioning in town. "best avocados!" Fine basketwork.

**Amante - 2009:** Bukaville was a rough place. Bougainville was the scene of 10 years of civil war in which tens of thousands were thought to have been killed. If the admiral doesn't look too happy in the picture above, it's because she spent an hour being surrounded by hostile men who wanted her views on race relations. They also wanted her outboard motor. The guy lying on the boat just behind her simply stared at her with that betel-nut dazed look. This was one place where we couldn't leave the dingy unattended.

We would like to say that the officials here couldn't have been nicer and were really glad to see us. But the locals were hostile and there is no nice place to anchor as the large bay south of Bukaville is riddled with shoals. We decided to bounce off Buka and head south to our next destination, the Shortlands!

#### **3.6.4 Teop Bay / Sabah (Bougainville E Coast)**

**Screensaver – September 2018:** 05 34.3763 S / 155 03.1540 E 15m, mud, 3g

Enroute from Numa to Buka, I encountered rising winds and decided to take refuge in Teop Bay. I tried for the next 2 days to leave and honour my promise to go straight to Buka, fearing the further delays wouldn't look good when I eventually checked in at Buka. However, each time I was forced to retreat with 30+ knots from North, on top of 1 to 1.5knts of current going the other way, made for very steep large seas.

**Screensaver – August 2017:** 05 34.8248 S / 155 03.7003 E 6m Sand, 2G. Having left Ramun (near Buka Town) fairly early we had time on our side for change with only 33nm to go, and we had motored a good third of that when we started to get some wind, so time to start sailing and conserve the diesel. The wind went from just sailable to just under gale force over the next hour. Watusi bashed his way through it under motor and we tacked our way to the entrance arriving not long after. I was glad to get in though, and even more glad to find the anchorage was quite well protected. Being second to arrive meant that all the local canoes had

already collected around Watusi and lucky for us given the weather we really didn't get bothered then.

The next day they were out in force Ken & Isaac (Ken's Crew) went ashore to meet the locals and Kim and I followed a bit later.

When we were on the beach, I saw at least 1 person standing on the back of Screensaver and now the race was to get back to the boat.

Everything seemed in order until Kim asked where are the slippers (thongs, flip-flops, jandals). I usually leave mine in the tender and both Kim's and mine had been nicked. A quick trip back to the beach and asking around telling the locals that this is not the way, we give you stuff and you steal from us !!!... One of the others spoke up and said he saw them and they hid one pair. Mum yelled something at him and mine magically appeared, but not Kim's. Ken neglected to tell me his had already been stolen early.

Back on Screensaver I sat on the back and said to the canoes around us, I'm not impressed, you come into my home when I'm not there, steal from us. If I came snooping around your home when your not there I would expect you might be inclined to hit me. A couple of older guys went away and said they will sort it.

Two hours later Chief Andrew comes out carrying the missing thongs and apologises . So I explained its not the thongs so much its the principle, what would be next and the fact they were on the boat and we have given away a bunch of stuff.... we have a beer and give him some smokes and thank him. Chief Andrew asks if we would like to come to their local dance late this afternoon, and some music. So yes that would be nice thankyou.

The canoe population had grown and I thought.... well the chief has just been they all know what has just happened..... all would be well. So I threw my thongs back in the Tender. Bugger me days if they didn't get nicked again within about 10 min. WTF.....A few choice words bellowed from Screensaver and one of the boys piped up and said it was my brother and when you yelled he tossed them in the water and took off. So for the second time I got my thongs back.

I returned to the chief and told him I'm sorry I will not becoming this afternoon as shortly after you left they had another go and stole my thongs again and now Kim is worried what else will go, its just not safe and then I left.

After the dance and music that afternoon chief Andrew comes back out just on dark and explains the boys Dad died and Mum turned to alcohol and really cant control them.... etc..... which sounds not dissimilar to many in the western world. He tells me that he has told the mother that unless between them they can control them he will need to call the police and have them removed.

So needless to say we were pretty keen to move on in the morning which we did.

### **3.6.5 Numa (Bouganville E Coast)**

**Screensaver – September 2018:** 05 52.11 S / 155 14.16 E 16m,sand & mud 3G

I was enroute to check in at Buka (coming from the Solomons), and stopped at Numa for an overnight. I decided to risk going ashore to see if I could get a sim card, so I had internet to get

weather. Eventually a couple of local girls confirmed I can get a SIM card here, but I had no Kina (PNG money). So I gave them some Solomon dollars and they said they will sort it for me. So together we walk around and they find someone who will take Solomon dollars, great news. I give them an exchange rate and hand some more Solomon dollars..... and then it's like something out of Miami vice--the police appear, immigration, customs, border protection. What are you doing, what you doing selling to these girls, where is your passport how did you get here, what are you doing with this money and these people, you are not allowed here--they had all come to bust the marijuana supply up and I was in the wrong place at the right time.

So I had to take them all out to the boat all the time thinking... oh shit the marijuana thing is fine, its not me, but this will bring the checkout-in issues into the lime light.

I think they realized after the locals said "he has nothing to do with this" and searching of Screensaver that I was not involved in the Marijuana. However the immigration guys and border guys were not happy about me being on land and or stopping. When I explained why I was on shore, proved I had Buka immigration number to call and a name showed them some emails to Kavieng, some SMS txt messages to Solomon's Immigration where I was trying to figure out how do this, things started to calm down.

They asked me if I had my sim card now and said no the girls have my money. So we all trundle back to the beach, all of us getting drenched and the police send boys for the two girls. Eventually discovering they about 3 kms away and had just changed the money. The Police said you wait on the beach, we will stay here with you, when you get your SIM and money you will leave right away.

The border guy was much nicer, and said go back to boat we will send the girls out with your stuff. When I explained what the police had said, he said, this is my area not his, you just go it will be fine, but get to Buka tomorrow come see us and we will sort the rest out.

Later, just before dark the girls turned up, SIM card, change, and even topped up, so all was good.

I had been watching a weather system, that looked like it would actually develop into a cyclone, which in these latitudes is basically unheard of. Next morning I set off to Buka, and when the winds rose to a constant 30 knots gusting above gale force, I was forced to take refuge at Teop Bay, and explain this to Buka when I got there.

Screensaver – July 2017: Stopped here on the way down from Buka Passage headed south, no comments recorded.

### **3.6.6 Kieta Peninsula (Bouganville E Coast)**

**Screensaver – September 2018 – Bakawari Island:** 06 11.27 S / 155 39.18 E Anchor in 15m, sand, no Sim so no cell.

I have been here before, and the main town Arawa just a short hop away also I believe has clearance capabilities, but this is the town where much of the trouble was and if you are Australian, you definitely don't want to be going to the town.

Last time I stopped at this little spot a local Banana boat took us in to do a bit of shopping, get some top-up etc, locals were nice at the anchorage "then". But in town the reception wasn't



good and clearly they are still carrying a bunch of resentment and we basically got told to f... off. Saying I wasn't Australian helped, but not enough to make me feel comfortable.

So this time it would be just a stop to sleep no trip to town. But even that did not go to plan.

Around midnight, two canoes front up, what are you doing here etc. I thought they were looking to trade. I said its late guys go home its after midnight. That wasn't what they wanted to hear and things started to get a little anti. This is our home I am the land owner, you go home and get out of here.... Things were escalating and waking me up in the middle of the night didn't catch me at my most diplomatic sense of humour. My persuader was just behind me, and as they hinted in English about knocking off my outboard I asked if it was there intention to steal it and they denied it was.

Slowly I was able to bring things back to exactly what they wanted, which was a bottle of scotch !!! Yea right. We finished up about 2 hrs. later sharing a beer, and they left with 2 more. My persuader was returned to its hidey, my beer can alarm was setup and I returned to bed with no further troubles. I believe they simply had too much to drink and wanted more.

**Screensaver – August 2017 – Assio Bay:** 06 10.4989 S / 155 37.3538 E

### **3.6.7 Zeune Islands (Just offshore Bouganville East Coast)**

**Screensaver – Sep 2018:** 06 17.98 S / 155 49.98 E 18m, sand, no cell no sim. These two islands are beautiful and I have not seen such beautiful blue clear water for a long time. I could see the anchor just over 18m of water.

So blue, so clear I had to go for a quick dip. Although it was like a swimming pool there wasn't a lot to see. If I had more time I would have gone out to the near by reef and I'm sure out there it would be alive.

A guy came asking for money to anchor here, but I was tired and wasn't very diplomatic in my refusal to pay. As he retreated saying its ok, its ok, no problem. I explained I don't have any Kena anyway.

### **3.6.8 Torakina Harbor (Bouganville West Coast)**

**Soggy Paws – March 2019:** We left Ramun Bay, Buka at "sparrow fart" and motorsailed the whole day south down the west coast of Bouganville. There was virtually no wind and it didn't seem likely we'd find any more wind by going offshore, so we stayed in close along the coast. The charting in this area is pretty bad, and Google Earth is fuzzed out offshore, so we felt better staying in where we could see the reefs on Google Earth. (Note: My Garmin chart did seem fairly accurate).

We arrive at almost dark at Torakina Harbor, and tossed our anchor at 06-14.52 S / 155-01.99 E in about 45 ft of water. The bottom looked like sand (from the fishfinder) and came up as black sand and marl on the anchor in the morning.

There were a few canoes about fishing, but none bothered us. We could see cooking fires on the beach to the east, and a few people (kids) waved and hooted at us as we dropped anchor.

In the morning we left again at the crack of dawn. There is a big volcano, still smoking, to the east that makes good pictures.

In the wind and sea conditions at the time, we could have been 5 miles offshore and not had much wind or wave action, but this harbor was pretty nice. It was open to the north, but we could have tucked in a little closer to find some lee had we arrived in daylight.

### **3.6.9 Tonelei Harbor**

**SSCA Bulletin – 1992:** Tonelei Harbor, an excellent anchorage on the south end of Bougainville Island is a protected bay just a mile or so around from the light on the reef. Anchorage very protected and villagers friendly and generous.

## **3.7 New Britain Island – Rabaul and Kokopo**

### **3.7.1 Rabaul (Port of Entry)**

**Wikipedia – 2016 - Rabaul:** Rabaul is a township in East New Britain province, on the island of New Britain, in the country of Papua New Guinea. New Britain is an island about 60 kilometres to the east of the island of New Guinea. Rabaul was the provincial capital and most important settlement in the province until it was destroyed in 1994 by falling ash of a volcanic eruption.

During the eruption, ash was sent thousands of meters into the air and the subsequent rain of ash caused 80% of the buildings in Rabaul to collapse. After the eruption the capital was moved to Kokopo, about 20 kilometres (12 mi) away. Rabaul is continually threatened by volcanic activity due to having been built on the edge of Rabaul caldera, a flooded caldera of a large pyroclastic shield.

Rabaul was known as Simpsonhafen during the German New Guinea administration which controlled the area between 1884 and formally till 1919. From 1910 Rabaul was the headquarters of German New Guinea until captured by the British Empire during World War I, when it became the capital of the Australian mandated Territory of New Guinea until 1937 when it was first destroyed by volcano.

During World War II it was captured by the Japanese in 1942, and it became the main base of Japanese military and naval activity in the South Pacific. Settlements and military installations around the edge of the caldera are often collectively referred to as Rabaul despite the old town of Rabaul itself being reduced to practical insignificance by the volcanic eruption in 1994.

As a tourist destination, Rabaul is popular for its volcanoes, scuba diving and for snorkelling sites, spectacular harbour and other scenery, World War II history, flora and fauna, and, of course, the fascinating and colourful cultural life of the Tolai people. Before the 1994 eruption, Rabaul was a popular commercial and recreational boating destination; fewer private small craft visit now, but 10-12 cruise ships visit Rabaul each year, including the Queen Elizabeth carrying up to 5000 passengers. Tourism is a major industry in Rabaul and East New Britain generally.

**Patience – Nov 2019 – Checking In at Rabaul:** Checking in in Rabaul proved to be a challenge as we didn't have a visa and visa on arrival was not possible. However after lots of talking and emailing and applying for the online visa at their website we managed to check in in just under a weeks time. All the while anchored in front of the Rabaul Yacht club and having the permission from immigration to go to town to get SIM card and provisions. What we have learned and like to share is the following:

- Biosecurity, easy and painless, Cost total 181,20 Kina.

- Customs, easy, and free. But only after a visa has been granted.
- Immigration. Best, having a Visa on arrival. If not, two options, both online. Standard visitor Visa. 30 days, process time approx. 3 hours. Or Yachtsman online Visa, 60 days, processing time 3-4 working days. Both online visas cost US\$ 50.
- Customs inland cruising permits, check in, check out. The officer we had (Jeffrey) requested a 50 Kina bribe for doing this on “his” time, also asked for Whiskey and Beer.

After checking out the local area and two visits to Kokopo we moved on to Mioko island at the Dukes.

**Soggy Paws – Mar 2019**—Friends of ours just coming from PNG recommended we contact Rod Pearce from Niugini Diving when we get to Rabaul. He’s a good source of information, and also does dive charters. [info@niuginidiving.com](mailto:info@niuginidiving.com) When we met him in March 2019, Rod was semi-retired from the dive charter business, and preparing a cruising sailboat to go cruising Micronesia and Marshall Islands in 2020. But he gave us lots of info on the Rabaul area, including dive waypoints for the 4 best dives in Rabaul Harbor.

We spent a week on a mooring at **Rabaul Yacht Club**. There is no fee for the mooring if you are staying a short while, but they expect you to come in and buy a few beers at the bar and come to their Friday night dinner (the only time they serve food at the yacht club). The dinner has good food for a reasonable price. You can leave your dinghy safely at the YC dock, there is wifi in the bar, and you can dispose of trash. If you plan to spend some time in this area of PNG, they encourage you to pay a K200 “temporary membership fee”, which entitles you to membership at the Rabaul Yacht Club for a year.

We were there during rainy season, and Rod said it had been very rainy in the proceeding weeks. The club grounds were a bit sloshy as a result.

It was easy to catch a shared taxi (in 15-seat vans) into town, for K1 per person, from the Yacht Club. Sometimes we had to walk out to the road to catch one, but several times, the van would come right down the YC driveway to check for passengrs. These (7A vans) go right into town and drop you off at the market, and one of the biggest grocery stores (SOHO), where there is also a BSP ATM. If you want better provisioning, Kokopo has a couple of stores that cater to western tastes, including a great selection of cheese. The fresh market was large and had a wide selection of local fruits and vegetables. The vans going back leave from the van loading area next to the market, just ask someone where the queue for the 7A PMV is. It is possible to take a van from Rabaul into Kokopo, I think it is 1A (but ask at the van area in Rabaul). Not sure the price. But the trip takes about 45 minutes.

Note: best to get to the ATM’s in the morning, they often run out of cash by mid-day. SOHO supermarket would permit you to get cash back if you bought something from them, if the ATM is not working. Besides the BSP ATM at SOHO, there’s a BSP with 3 ATMs up the street a little way.

Everyone seemed friendly (locals and expats alike). But we did keep asking where it was safe for us to go on our own, and where it wasn’t. We followed their advice and had no problems, with either theft or ugly behavior.

**Volcano Hike:** We went on a guided hike to see the volcano, arranged by Liliane at the Rabaul Hotel. That cost K250 for the van and the guides (security) to take us up the mountain. It's a 15-pax van, so it was perfect for 8 of us. We hiked right up to the rim of the smoking volcano. Awesome pictures. They recommend doing this first thing in the morning (we left at 5:30am). It is about a 15 minute walk across level ground and a half hour scramble up the hardened lava to get to the rim. Bring good shoes, a walking stick, and good knees.

**Day Tour / Historical:** We were referred to Suzie at the Rabaul Hotel to arrange a day tour, but her prices were "tourist prices" and we were looking for yachtie prices. We eventually arranged for a van for K200 for the day, and used one of the Rabaul Historical Society members as a tour guide, for another K200. Split 8 ways, this was reasonable for an all day tour, which took us all the way down to Kokopo with a number of stops, both historical and shopping, and up to the Volcano Monitoring Station, which is also a great view of the harbor. Contact Francis, the van owner at 7040 9265 and Rob Rawlinson the tour guide at 7254 3486 to make your own arrangements.

**Diving:** Rod Pearce gave us waypoints for the diveable wrecks in the harbor. He can fill tanks, but you need to supply your own gear. Sadly, between reprovisioning and the rain, we never got to dive any of the wrecks.

**Fuel:** You can arrange for diesel to be delivered in 200L drums to the YC dock, and they will bring a small pump to pump it into your boat (rafted alongside the YC dock) or into your jugs. If you want smaller amounts, or want to see your fuel pumped directly from the pump, we hired a van for a half day to take 4 boats' worth of jugs into MC Seeto for diesel and gasoline. It's a little cheaper to buy diesel by the barrel, but some of us were gun-shy after bad experiences with delivered fuel in barrels in Indonesia.

You can get your propane bottles refilled at the depot in town (ask Rod what fittings they can accommodate).

We found epoxy and bottom paint (at fairly shocking prices) at MC Seeto, Barlow's, and another store.

**Eating Out:** The Rabaul Yacht Club does dinner on Friday nights. They offer a pretty good selection, and the price is OK for the food provided. We had lunch one day at the Rabaul Hotel, a 10-15 minute walk from RYC. It was good but a little pricey. They also offer dinner. There are many "Kaibar's" in town. This is apparently the PNG version of a fast food place. We ate lunch a couple of times at the Kaibar at the Soho Grocery store. The lamb stew was OK and relatively cheap. You can also pick up cooked food at the market.

**Yacht Clearance:** We did a provisional inward clearance at Customs in Kavieng, our first port. 2 of our boats had visas in advance in their passports (acquired in home country) and 2 did not. We arranged by email with PNG Immigration to apply for a visa in advance by filling a form out and emailing it back, with the understanding that we could then be OK to clear in at Kavieng.

On arrival in Kavieng, the Kavieng Customs guy gave us Customs Clearance and stamped our passports. When we left Kavieng we got outward clearance for Rabaul (one piece of paper, no cost), which we gave to the Customs guy in Rabaul. On leaving Rabaul for the Solomons, we again visited the Customs officer in Rabaul, obtained a Customs clearance, and got our passports stamped out. The officials in both Rabaul and Kavieng were friendly, relaxed and

accommodating. Not much paperwork, no boat visits, and a small cost only for Plant Quarantine on arrival in Kavieng.

The Customs guy in Rabaul told us that Rabaul was the clearance port, not Kokopo.

**Freebird – Feb 2015:** We spent 2 nights in Kokopo and then moved to the Rabaul Y.C moorings 04-12.4 S / 152°11 E which require the payment of a temporary membership. The yacht club was very basic but guaranteed safe, as was all of Rabaul we were assured, and thus it proved.

The Rabaul Hotel is worth checking out for a meal and advice on hikes to nearby volcanos and other spots of interest. We arranged a drum of diesel through them also.

A local expat, Rod, was living on his boat Barbarian at the yacht club and has a vast knowledge of anchorages and places to visit. He told me about some on the west coast of New Ireland which were not on the chart and where we stopped on the the trip to Kavieng.

One of these was Marob Island.

Anchoring fees are asked for in some places but not many. The only time I encountered it was at Pigeon Island near Kokopo. The area is a national park and the blokes were just trying it on so I refused but gave them some small thing for good will. Most people leave if asked for a fee.

**Segue – December 2014** (via Noonsite Published: 2014-12-04 [Papua New Guinea](#))

There have been MAJOR changes entering PNG - and it's all good!

Previously, one needed a visa prior to entering PNG waters. This has now changed. The government has recently passed legislation enabling visas on arrival -- which applies to two ports of entry -- Port Moresby and Rabaul. While the new rules apply primarily to persons entering PNG by air -- at least in New Britain, it also applies to yachts.

We just cleared into PNG at the Rabaul Airport and were granted 60 day visas (free!) -- which CAN be extended for another 30 days at a cost of K\$400. There was ABSOLUTELY no fuss or bother. So, the procedure for clearing into PNG (at least in Rabaul) is as follows:

- 1) Anchor in Rabaul just off the yacht club (it's easy to find -- it's to the right of the main wharf as you enter the Harbour).
- 2) Contact "Rabaul Harbour Control" on VHF16 and let them know you've arrived -- and request quarantine clearance.
- 3) Harbour Control will let you know when you might expect Bio Security to come out to the boat.
- 4) At the appointed time, keep an eye open on the shore and at some point a pick up truck will show up with both Quarantine and Health Inspectors. Go and get them in the dinghy. Don't worry, these are two (or maybe three) of the most easy-going civil-servants you'll ever meet). Their services will cost about US\$90.00. Don't panic! Everything else is free after this point!
- 5) Next step is Customs. This is super easy, except you have to take a bus! Customs is located in the nearby town of Kokopo. From the yacht club, walk up to the main road and catch the #8 bus to the market for K1\$ (50 cents). Then at the market, catch the #8 bus to Kokopo (K\$3 -- us\$1.50) to Kokopo. It will drop you off at the market. From there, walk about 150

meters to the Westpac building (blue roof). Customs is on the 2nd floor. Again, another awesome sort of truly friendly civil-servants. They were not at ALL concerned that we checked in some number of weeks after leaving our last port (Vanuatu -- we cruised the Louisades for some time before we checked into Rabaul.....)

A note on security: Some cruisers have anchored off Kokopo, but it is NOT recommended. There is a lot of "banana boat" traffic from here to the nearby Duke of York islands -- and as recently as this week, a cruiser was assaulted on board and had some items stolen. Rabaul, on the other hand is more secure -- especially in front of the yacht club where there is 24/7 security monitoring the anchorage.

6) Last step is Immigration. Go back to the market and catch the #8 bus which will take you to the airport. This is where Immigration hangs out. If there's nobody there, duck into the arrivals area and find the Customs folks. They'll put out a call for the Immigration people for you. Don't be in a hurry. Chat up the Customs people. Lovely folks! You'll probably end-up having tea with them!

The bottom line is Rabaul is truly AWESOME. I've rarely encountered more lovely people. There's a bad rep about "raskols" -- but this isn't a problem everywhere. Rabaul is amazingly "chill". Great security if you're worried, the yacht club is filled with awesome expats with great tales to tell. Of particular note is Rod -- who's been running diving here for the past 30 years. Stop by -- it's awesome! But DO keep an eye open on the Volcano -- you might have to up-anchor in a hurry if she's set to blow!

Other comments about Rabaul.

The **Internet** here is AWSOME! Digicel just upgraded their towers to 4G and -- with either a smartphone (iOS or Android) and subscribing to a data plan, you'll enjoy FAST 4g service! Sims are available in most of the supermarkets for k\$5.00 and data is -- as usual in this part of the world -- a little "spendy", but very high quality. Skype works perfectly! Whoever sells you the sim can help you with selecting a data package that works for you --and help you configure your device to access the 'net.

**Tagtraumer – December 2014 – Clearing In:** Rabaul is the official Port of Entry, not Kokopo.

It is very important that yachts follow the proper procedure for clearing into PNG through Kokopo/Rabaul.

You must anchor by Rabaul so that Quarantine inspection can be carried out before you are cleared in with Immigration and Customs in Kokopo. The authorities are extremely concerned that yachts are not adhering to the correct procedures. The Quarantine man, Peter Johnson, said the best thing to do is to go to the Yacht Club and they will help yachts do things the right way.

There was talk of fining us and another yacht who had done things the wrong way.

**Westward II – December 2010:** On arrival to Rabaul we pulled up at the jetty outside the Rabaul Yacht Club in Simspson Harbour. Rob from a dive/fishing charter boat MV'Barbarian' also on the jetty came out to catch our lines and have a chat. On discovering our freezer had packed up he offered up a spare freezer he had on his power boat, it was the perfect size and soon accommodated the rest of our frozen goods.

Thanks to Rob and also Tim at the Travel Lodge we soon had people to look at the freezer. With their help and phone calls back to the supplier in Australia we soon had it going again.

We spent a couple of days on the jetty, and topped up with fuel and food. There were 3 other yachts at anchor – Danish, French, and American – and we caught up with them at the yacht club and also did some sightseeing together.

Simpson Harbour is one of the best natural harbours in the South Pacific and the shipping and support facilities continue here, however the main town is now Kokopo 18 miles away. Rabaul is a fascinating town, everywhere the ground is black, thick with ash, desolate and barren looking this being the result of the eruption of Mt Tavurvur in 1994.

There are hundreds of kilometres of tunnels from WWII throughout the hills. Selena walked up the hill with the Danish crew to look at some of the old tunnels with Rod guiding the group. The ones visited were concrete reinforced built into the hills, some with narrow entrances, one they had to climb a steep dirt wall to the exit, and in some Japanese writing was still visible on the walls.

We also visited the New Guinea Club and this showed the history of Rabaul through its time as German New Guinea, the British and administered by Australia, and Japanese occupation. Rabaul has seen its fair share of natural disasters with the volcanic eruptions of 1937 and 1994, and a tsunami in the 70's.

From here we headed off for New Ireland.

### **3.7.2 *Eascape Bay***

**Westward II – November 2010 - Escape Bay:** 04.14.993'S / 152.13.220'E We started our cruise of the Gazelle Peninsula in Escape Bay, just outside Rabaul, where we anchored for the night in the lee of the volcanoes. It was pretty daunting looking up at these big hills, black, brown, dead.

In the morning we went for a walk ashore, coconut palms now bare poles sticking up out of the ash and rock, an odd cluster of green grass breaking the bleak landscape. Many piles of wood, neatly stacked, had been collected by the locals for firewood. We saw the remains of some houses and further around there were canoes on the beach and small huts among the debris.

### **3.7.3 *Kokopo***

**Wikipedia – 2016 - Kokopo:** Kokopo is the capital of East New Britain in Papua New Guinea. The capital was moved from Rabaul in 1994 when the volcanoes Tavurvur and Vulcan erupted. As a result, the population of the town increased more than sixfold from 3,150 in 1990 to 20,262 in 2000.[1]

Kokopo was known as Herbertshöhe during the German New Guinea administration which controlled the area between 1884 and formally until 1919. Until 1910 it was the capital of the German colonial administration.

On Sunday, March 29, 2015, a strong earthquake, of a preliminary magnitude of at least 7.5, which if confirmed would be the strongest earthquake in the world up to that point for 2015, was recorded near Kokopo, and a tsunami warning was issued.

The remains of the former capital Rabaul are located some 20 km (12 mi) to the north-east of Kokopo, when using the Kokopo-Rabaul Highway. There are still some 4,000 inhabitants in Rabaul, down from over 17,000 before the latest volcanic eruption.

Rabaul Airport (also called Tokua Airport), one of Papua New Guinea's largest domestic airports, is located a few kilometres east of Kokopo.

**2XS – August 2016:** 04-20.524S / 152-18.987E, on a Mooring at Rapopo Bay Resort

I flew back into PNG at Kokopo (after flying out in Kavieng). At last and finally I got to a small cosy airport at Kokopo (New Britain). And there was Pete, with Paul from the resort, ready to drive us back to the dinghy.

A day or so later we did the “dolphin swim” with Kokopo Plantation Resort. That was fun but tiring as we were hanging off the side of the boat while the boat driver tried to keep up with the pods of dolphins.

East New Britain is a place of extreme beauty. Lush and green, mountainous, with an impressive array of volcanoes, one of which blew up very violently in 1994 and decimated the once-pretty town of Rabaul, said by many to be the very nicest town in all of PNG. Nobody died. They had enough warning to evacuate everyone to Kokopo, across the bay, where we are now. Apparently the government funded new housing in Kokopo but a large number of people silently slipped back to their beloved Rabaul.

So apart from the botany and the geology, there is a lot of history here. Pete and I are very ignorant, we have discovered. For example, we did not know that we had submarines in 1914, or that Australia fought Germany here in World War I. We did know a bit about the fight against the Japanese in World War II but had no idea of the extent of the occupation here.

The island is riddled with tunnels, some of them 90 metres long, with extensive passageways, rooms, and stairs.

The Japanese apparently prepared the tunnels some three years before the invasion. The tunnels were dug mostly by Indian prisoners of war, most of whom died. I think they started out with 18,000 and ended up with only 2,000 surviving.

Our first stop was at the Bitapaka cemetery. It is a very beautiful cemetery, with glorious trees shading a smooth green native lawn. All maintained by the Australian government. I have been to many war cemeteries and must admit...I don't love them. Heart-wrenching sad, all these dead young men. Pete wandered around happily looking at gravestones while I sat in a shady pavilion and read the visitor book. Only one person wrote anything which echoed my feelings...War, what is it good for? Absolutely nothing! (Thank you German visitor, and Pink Floyd.)

Pete had done a tour here previously, so he knew where to go and what to look at. I got a very good abridged version. We drove up a little track to the Japanese hospital tunnel, and were soon in the charge of our new friend, Noah, whose wife is the traditional owner of this land.

He took us first to the barge tunnel, owned by a large man called Doyle, who boomed out some facts and figures for us. Quite amazing...This tunnel went back 90 metres into the hillside and has the remains of five large barges in it. 300 metres from the sea! The Japanese had designed an elaborate series of gantries, floating jetties, railway lines, to get the barges out of



the water and hidden in the hills. Amazing!! And oh those poor prisoners of war, and local village people, forced to labour long and hard. Also...it can't have been much fun for the Japanese soldiers, either, hiding in the tunnels, popping out into the jungle to kill or be killed...

As we walked through the jungle from one lot of tunnels to another, we heard banging, crashing, shouting, yahooing...Some young chaps having a party, and NOT going to church, unlike just about everyone else on the island.

After our tour of the tunnels, he said that sometimes the local boys come and sleep in there. It is cool, and comfortable if you don't mind sleeping on gritty sandy stone. And in fact...one of the drunken young vandals would surely be in need of a place to stay, having destroyed his mother's hut... It turned out he was...one of Noah's very own bubus...(Bubus = grandchildren...)

We had sandwiches on a grassy knoll on one of the smaller volcanoes overlooking Rabaul.

After this food and photo opp, we went over to the other side of town, right up to the base of the newly-erupted volcano. Small but lethal!

There is a small hot spring stream at the base. Two lots of guardians are waiting to collect entry fees. First you have to pay to go through a gate; next you have to pay to walk across to the spring. They are deadly rivals, these entry guards. Both groups claim to be the rightful owners of the land. And they probably are...it's just that the hapless visitor had to go through one lot of rightfully owned land to get to the next lot.

Never mind; it was worth paying twice. This not the sort of hot spring you might like to wallow in...the water is 100 degrees and will cook you quicker than you might like to think.

People zip from one island to another in speedy little banana boats. No shade, no lifejackets...we counted 22 people disembarking from one of them yesterday! They all look remarkably happy after tossing around on the swell, with small children and baskets of food wedged between their feet.

Pete spent the whole day today getting fuel, with David and Christopher from the resort team. It took the three of them about six hours, lugging the jerry cans in the dinghy, up to the ute, into town to the petrol station, back again...Their reward was...a bit of money, a silver ring from our dwindling ring collection, and three photos each of themselves with Pete, now known as BossMan!

**2XS – August 2016 – Diving:** We did two dives, with Paul and David, from Rapopo Plantation resort dive centre.

The first dive was into very shallow water (about five metres) and then along to a wreck no more than 20 metres deep. It was extremely pretty; the wreck was a small coastal cargo ship, covered with nudibranchs and coral and swarming with clouds of fish.

The second dive was just around the corner, off Pigeon Island. We went along a drop-off wall down to 20-30 metres (could have gone down down down...the wall seemed to go very deep, well over 100 metres...) It was just beautiful. Along the wall it was like a superhighway of fish, big and small, going about their business. Out in the deeper blue large tuna zoomed past, and the occasional shark. Above us were large barracuda, cruising like missiles. And all around

were smaller fish going this way with the current, that way against the current, up and then down again.

We swam against the current to begin with and then drifted back effortlessly to find the dive boat ready to pick us up.

I had such a good time that I wanted to stay a few more days and do some more dives with lovely Paul and David! Until...we got the bill...The dives here are eye-wateringly expensive...Approximately 500 kina each – around \$100 per dive...In Raja Ampat we were paying about \$50-60 per dive...I would wholeheartedly recommend this resort, this dive centre...but come with deep pockets!

**Yawana – 2015 (via Noonsite):** A wonderful and historic place. I anchored in front of Rapopo resort, Kokopo. They welcome yachts and I frequented the bar and restaurant (excellent pizzas!) and was free to use the swimming pool. Unfortunately my boat was broken into one evening shortly after sunset as I was enjoying a sundowner ashore. A few small things were stolen, not a major robbery, but a robbery none the less.

**Free Bird – February 2015:** When arriving in Blanche Bay do not anchor off Kokopo town, it is not safe and a boat we met was robbed here. The Rapopo Plantation Resort to the east of Kokopo 04-18.3 S / 152-11 E had a mooring which was available to visiting boats (after checking with them) and considered safe. We spent 2 nights at the Rapopo Resort and then moved to Rabaul.

**Tagtraumer – November 2014 – Boarded and Robbed (from Noonsite):** Two nights ago at anchor in Kokopo, about 7.30pm, we were boarded and robbed at knifepoint by 3-4 young men, about 20-21 years old. Two men tried to tie up the captain who was dozing in the cockpit. They gagged him with a t-shirt and held a machete to his throat and told him, if he called out, they would kill him.

I was in my cabin when a third man tried to cover my mouth and told me "don't scream". I screamed for all I was worth and he bolted. I chased him as far as the saloon and saw him getting away over the stern (he ended up in the water lol). They paddled away in an outrigger canoe as fast as they could.

We fired off a flare and the boat in front with 2 PNG guys motored over to investigate. When we told them what happened they did a bit of a search but came back 15 mins later saying they didn't have the fuel to keep looking. The rascals left behind their machete and a t shirt.

We tried to radio Rabaul Port Control on Channel 16 to alert them as to what happened, but could not raise them. We reported the incident to the police first thing next day. The guy who came inside was wearing a head torch and stole the wallet that was on the table (1000 kina and credit cards) and a laptop computer.

I used to work in Rabaul so was very aware of the security issues. We had removed EVERYTHING from the cockpit and chained and locked EVERYTHING up, including everything in the dinghy too (fuel tank, paddles, outboard). Nevertheless we were still done over.

I have been told that yachts have been robbed no matter where you anchor in the bay. A boat arrived here a few days ago and told us a yacht was boarded and robbed at gunpoint at Alotau.

The locals we have told about it are extremely angry and upset about this situation. Everyone has been helpful and supportive.

A good light in the cockpit at night might go a long way towards deterring such attacks, especially if you anchor in front of the resorts and as close to the shore as possible.

We were left quite shaken but thankfully we were not hurt.

**Totem – November 2012:** We had a very uneventful sail from Budi Budi atoll up to Kokopo, at the NE corner of New Britain island. I use the term 'sail' very loosely here, as we motored or motor sailed almost the entire distance- about 325 miles. The sea state matched what we experienced floating along the equator during Totems passage to the Marquesas from Mexico: a tie for the most board-flat, almost oily, seas we've seen. We saw schools of tuna but had no luck ourselves, catching only a skipjack (and nearly losing it to a shark as we pulled in the line).

PNG isn't known for cruising guide coverage, so here are a few tips to this area for those in our wake:

\* Kokopo: the safest place to anchor is off the Rapopo resort. It's less convenient to the public market and facilities, but you can dinghy over or anchor shorter term there. We wouldn't trust the moorings but didn't dive on them (they do not belong to the resort and do not appear to be maintained). There's one sandy patch, but the bottom here is mostly hardpan coral and difficult to get the anchor set.

\* If you do anchor off town, know that customs did not want boats there. We stayed 2 nights then moved. For a reasonable fee, security guards for businesses onshore can provide guards, 24/7, to watch dinghies and boats if desired.

\* Kokopo is a great place to provision for food, fuel, propane, and other supplies. The prices are probably about as good as we'll get without going to the mainland. Diesel was 2.50 kina/liter during our visit, with a minimum purchase of a 200 liter barrel. If you have a lot of islands left to visit, check out the wholesale stores for goods from bolts of cloth to pencils and workbooks for trade.

\* Internet is available from the Rapopo resort, through a direct plug in at the front office. If you'll be in areas with cell towers (don't bother if you're headed towards the Louisiades!), a Digicel USB modem is a good buy and readily topped up in areas with coverage. For boats coming west, I suspect the Digicel modems in Fiji work here with a change in the country setting.

\* In Rabaul, the bay at is so littered with wrecks and underwater junk (mostly WWII era) that you may not want to risk anchoring. Nylon rope at both ends of the chain of the RYC's mooring was sketchy at best, so Jamie went down (only about 22') and secured our own line to the mooring base.

\* Rabaul security: there are a LOT of kids hanging around the dock at the RYC. A boat near us had their dinghy somewhat trashed. Most was good natured from kids jumping and playing on it while they had it at the jetty while they were away on shore, but it appeared to have been deliberately spiked with something sharp as well. Consider hauling your dink up to the RYC (you'll want wheels) or asking the adults fishing on the jetty to help keep an eye on it. Many of them are mothers to the children splashing nearby.

\* Touring: we got our guide and driver through the RYC. Ask there or at the hotel for a recommendation. Total cost was 250 kina for 1/2 day (about \$125), 350 for full, plus 20 kina/adult or the guide. You need a lot of small bills to pay the property owners at locations you visit (typically 5 kina/adult).

\* A few of our group climbed up the volcano rim. This is not recommended by the officials at the observatory, but a local guy is happy to take you up for 50 kina / trip. He is the traditional owner of the land adjacent and is at the hot spring site daily from dawn to dusk. The extreme ends of the day are best for this hike, as the heat on the blackened earth is brutal. Round trip (plus dinghy ride from the RYC) can be done in a couple of hours.

It's in Kokopo that we officially entered Papua New Guinea, more than a month after leaving Australia. Quarantine visited Totem while I was ashore with customs: it was one of the easiest clearance processes we have experienced. Visas acquired from the consulate in Brisbane smoothed our entry. The official who completed our paperwork clucked like a mother hen over the children and wondered how we managed to keep them fed during our travels. She didn't let us go until we had been given an orientation to the locations of the public market and various grocery stores.

Kokopo is the first place we've been where I have reservations about our safety. It was in this area that the prior owners of a boat we met in Mexico, Rio Nimpkish, suffered a brutal attack that prompted them to end their cruising years. Last year, men armed with machetes came down a hatch into a boat anchored off town at night, tying up those aboard and stealing goods. They weren't seriously hurt, but it was a traumatic experience. But we've also been told these were isolated incidents in an otherwise friendly place. Our choice was to keep our visit brief, and to stay in the company of the boats we'd met in Budi Budi: looking out for each other and being available if needed.

We nearly passed Kokopo by, and that would have been a shame. It was extremely friendly: the kind of exuberant recognition that can go to your head. Walking to the market, it seemed like every other minibus or flatbed truck/bus going by erupted in waves and smiles and "Helloooo! Good morning!" Students called down from a hilltop with big waves. Almost everyone I passed in the street offered a greeting.

This was our first chance to check out hardware stores (time for a coconut scraper and a machete!) and get access to the Internet. The market was fantastic and offered welcome variety after weeks of similar island produce. We supplemented our staples with sweet pineapples, gorgeous eggplant, fresh greens, fresh ginger, bell peppers, spring onions, even bits of iceberg and a cabbage so tender I could pass it off as lettuce. Prices at the grocery store are higher than Australia- sometimes strikingly so. Powdered milk (forget about fresh) was at least double. It's painful to see food costs so high in such a poor place, and think about how limited the options are available to locals.

Kokopo is on the south side of a volcanic rim, with the town of Rabaul about 10 miles across the bay. Rabaul is the official capital of the province but was devastated by volcanic eruptions in 1994. Most of the population was moved to neighboring Kokopo, but Port facilities remain along with one main street of 'haus kaikai' (restaurants), a public market, banks and a few shops. It's supposed to be safe from eruption right now, but it's still unsettling to look up at the rim of a still-steaming volcano from our mooring at the Rabaul Yacht Club. An earthquake one night created some disturbing wave action around the boat, although it nothing dangerous.

Rabaul is full of interesting sites related to WWII history and the surrounding volcanoes. To try and take in as much as we could, we got together with our companion boats to hire a mini van, driver and guide. Thankfully many of our group were quite a bit smaller (we have nine children between three boats!) and we all managed to squeeze in, despite exceeding official capacity by a few bodies.

At the volcano, we were able to drive close to the base to hot springs. Not knowing what to expect, a few of us had tucked swimming suits into our bags for the day. Let's just say the boiling water we found was nothing like the hippy heaven hot springs we know from the Pacific Northwest! We might not have been able to go swimming, but a landowner who showed us around made quick work of boiling an egg in the steaming water to demonstrate.

Later, at the observation tower, a diagram helped identify from our high vantage point the many volcanic peaks around the rim of the bay. Several of them are new, the most recent mountain popping up in just the 19th century. Welcome to the ring of fire.

World War II monuments, ruins and relics were next. Niall has written up his experiences with the war relics on his blog, <http://totemtravels.blogspot.com>. It is incredible to see these tangible pieces of history: it reminds us how truly awful war is. Even when the lines of good and bad and motivation to fight are not as blurred as they are today, it is still cruel and devastating. It seems that the innocent still pay the highest price. In the tunnels carved by Japanese to load submarines, in my mind's eye the Indian slaves who worked them huddled in the shadows on the side: thousands of them died during the war under the Japanese. In Admiral Yamamoto's bunker, a small circular room painted with regional area maps and a range map centered on Rabaul left the chilling reminder of their use for warfare. We visited just a few hundred yards of the thousand miles of tunnel said to exist around Rabaul, carved by hand from rock. Peeking from the damp air through the cracks to the sea, you can imagine where anti aircraft guns would have trained on allied bombers.

With the looming monsoon weather change and the prospect of a friend meeting us in Indonesia for the holidays, we felt pressed to keep going and moved on to Kavieng. It seems like we could always linger to learn more and enjoy every place we visit, but we're all looking forward to snorkeling the pretty water and wrecks in the water off New Ireland.

Blog Link: <https://www.sailingtotem.com/2012/11/rabaul-and-kokopo-wwii-history-and.html>

**Asylum – 2011 (from Noonsite):** With regret, we report that what we thought was a safe, friendly town and anchorage in PNG turned out to be not so. We arrived in Kokopo on Monday, 7 March 2011, from the Solomons.

On Thursday night, 10 March, we were awakened at about 11:30 p.m. by 2 men wielding bush knives coming down through our V-berth hatch screen landing quite literally on top of us. They woke us from a sound sleep and were there before we had a chance to reach for the large can of Bear Pepper Mace that sits beside the bed. While one held us in bed at knife-point, constantly shushing us telling his partner to "go fast," the other ranted about wanting laptops and guns, and rifled through various areas of the boat looking for things, asking in particular for mobile phones as well. We do not carry weapons, and finally convinced them of that.

We managed to talk them out of taking our main laptop with email, navigation programs, etc., on it, and instead offered an old, back-up laptop, in a case. They also took cash (leaving everything

else in Jim's wallet), our 2 cell phones, a Palm Pilot, flash drives, a dive watch, and a few other small things before tying us up with clothes and wires and making their escape.

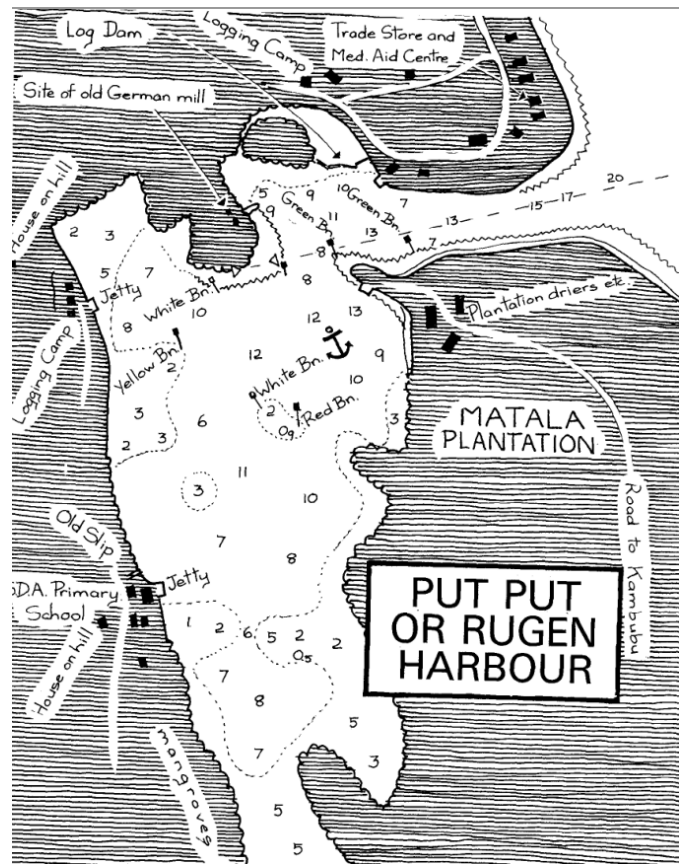
Jim was bound firmly, hands and feet, with hands tied behind. Katie was bound hands and feet as well, but with her hands tied in front. They left saying they would send "rescuers" in 10 minutes (which of course they didn't), but as soon as they had gone, Katie managed to untie Jim's hands and he was then able to release the other bonds. Fortunately, they did not take our Iridium phone, and we used that to call the local police, who promptly came out to the boat and took the report.

The robbers were extremely quiet; we never heard any engine noise and assume they paddled out in a canoe. Katie said in hindsight that earlier, while reading in bed and just before turning off the light, she had strong sense of body odor and actually wondered if someone might be near the boat, but dismissed the idea and assumed it was just a wind shift carrying new smells from land. It turned out that she had, indeed, been smelling their body odor.

We are very security conscious and had the dinghy raised, the main companionway locked, and other hatches dogged. Only the V-berth hatch was open for ventilation--our weak link -- though covered with a low awning. The stolen items are replaceable--we are thankful not to have been injured during the robbery. The local police were extremely responsive and we even met with the Provincial Police Commander the next morning. We also reported the theft to the Customs office. Everyone, including a few people we'd gotten to know even in our short time in Kokopo (e.g., the owner and his son at the mobile phone store, the ladies and an AusAID volunteer at the tourist office), expressed surprise that this had happened ("Never before in Kokopo!"), was extremely apologetic, and made offers of help to try to find the thieves and recover the items.

To add one other bit of context: On Tuesday night (our second there) we were visited by the police in the middle of the night (no less unsettling at the time), who reported that someone had phoned them to say "the yacht was being robbed." At the time, that wasn't true, though in retrospect the person who called (we understand it was the manager of a restaurant that overlooks the harbor) may have seen something. As a result of that visit, we already had some rapport with the local police, including names and their phone number at hand. They had had to "hire" a local boat to bring them out to Asylum to respond to that call and we found the 3 guys from the panga actually walking around on board, while we were talking to the police. We raised this issue with police commander when we met with him: that perhaps THOSE guys were also casing the boat at the time, a fact the police officers may or may not have been aware of. He promised to follow up on it.

We try not to condemn an entire country or cruising area because of a couple of opportunistic thugs. Robberies can happen



anywhere, but the incident has left us somewhat shaken and debating our original intention to spend more time exploring PNG.

We're now on a mooring at Ropopo Plantation Resort, near Kokopo, where owners Brian and Bev are welcome hosts to visiting cruisers. The resort is about 2 miles east of the Kokopo anchorage and provides moorings when possible. They monitor VHF 84. Bar and restaurant are excellent. They, too, were very surprised at what happened to us.

### **3.8 New Britain Island - South and East Coast**

#### **3.8.1 Put Put (Rugen Harbour)**

**Put Put Harbor Entrance (from Satellite chart):** 04 33.699 S / 152 21.600 E There are quite a few reefs inside the harbor, satellite chart use is advised. CM93 v2 has a detailed chart of the harbor, but it is offset a bit and does not show everything clearly. Lucas's chartlet doesn't show all the reefs.

**Westward II – November 2010:** 04 33.93 S / 152 21.26 E Well protected and calm.

**Alan Lucas – Pg 180 – 1978:** Put Put, also known as Rugen Harbour, is a superb, calm, weather-proof harbour. The entrance is deep but narrow—a little hard to find if you don't have an accurate chart.

The harbour has a Catholic Church owned logging camp on its north shore and a Seventh Day Adventist primary school towards its southwestern corner. There is also a large SDA settlement at Kambudu to the S and which is connected by road to the primary school. The whole area is connected by direct road to Rabaul.

The harbor beacons are green to port and red to starboard. Exactly why this is, I cannot say, but they are maintained well. The entrance leading beacons are white triangles.

Anchorage can be taken anywhere in the harbour except near the entrance where logging ships lie. The best anchorage is where shown on the chartlet.

Those interested in old machinery will be rewarded by a trip ashore to where the map shows an old German Timber Mill. Two ancient steam engines will be found sitting on concrete blocks among the coconut palms.

#### **3.8.2 Wide Bay**

**2XS – August 2016:** 05 12.552 S / 151 57.379 E (Ed note: these don't plot in Wide Bay). We anchored around 3pm, near a coconut plantation. It is nowhere near as glorious and beautiful as Irish Cove but...it is very nice to stop for the day!

#### **3.8.3 Jaquinot Bay**

**2XS – August 2016:** 05-36.006 S / 151-30.331 E

Our trip from Wide Bay to Jacquinot Bay was uneventful, but it was long, and we were exhausted but the time we dropped anchor a bit after 5.30pm.

We were greeted by ecstatic young men in canoes...Jasper, Ferdinand, Yonah, Salwood and Gramey. We tried to tell them we were too tired to be nice to visitors but they looked so totally

crushed that we let them on boat, gave them a few biscuits each, and showed them the wonders of 2XS. Jasper said he had never seen a boat like it; obviously catamarans don't call in to Jacquinot Bay very often.

We had planned a bit of a sleep-in, after a very early night but...gentle crashes against the side of the boat, footsteps...6am – visitors! Three canoes with cheery young fathers with small children, all waiting to see the wonders of 2XS. I sent them all off, gently enough, with a biscuit each, and told them Captain Pete was asleep. I imitated some snoring sounds, which they loved.

And then at 6.30...HELLO! HELLO! Grandma, hello???

Jasper and Co, with two hands of bananas and four coconuts...How could I resist?? It makes Pete and me just a bit giggly to be referred to, with great respect, as Grandad and Grandma...But, fair enough! We are most certainly older than their actual grannies...The boys didn't stay long; they had to rush off to school.

But...there is still a steady stream of happy delightful people wanting to chat.

After an unsuccessful battle with internet connection, I went for a restorative swim while Pete continued, unsuccessfully, to battle with the autopilot. I was much improved by my swim; Pete not so much by his struggle.

We lowered the dinghy and took it in to a little beach close to Palmalmal Secondary School. We had to shelter from the rain in the garage, where we had very nice conversations with some of the teachers.

Leo, one of the senior teachers, was very concerned when he found out Pete and I are alone on such a big boat as 2XS. Looking at us pityingly he said, "I can see how old you both are. Don't you think it would be a good idea to have someone young, to help you on your travels?" We said we thought we could just about manage and he was very surprised. "So you really think you are fit enough?" Do we REALLY look so very old and frail??

In the meantime, I was having a very nice chat with Joe, aged 45, senior teacher of Legal Studies and Social Science. I took two selfies of the two of us together. In one of them I look as if I am about to be murdered; he looks as if he is about to murder me... In the other he looks benign and I look...a bit old and frail!

He told me how very important it is for the students in PNG to learn English. It is, he says, their only hope of having a common language. There are (literally) hundreds of different local languages spoken in PNG and yes, it would be a definite advantage if they could understand one another! I told him that it is the same in India, and that they also have a unifying religion – cricket! He laughed and said it is becoming that way in PNG as well – not cricket, but...rugby!

After a few hours in the general store (Chinese owned, of course...) we made our way back to 2XS. There on the shore was a crowd of children, cheering wildly. We went up to them and said they could swim out to the boat. And swim they did!! They had a cheery woman with them – possibly mother to one or seven of them – and a nice young chap called Nathan. They ate a few biscuits, raced around the deck like mad things, posed for a photo which made them totally ecstatic when I printed it off for them, and then off they all jumped, with the mother holding the photo, in a plastic bag, above her head. Life is good, in Palmalmal!



That afternoon we had MANY MANY visitors. Biscuits and bracelets for all of them!

### **3.8.4 Ambio Village**

2XS – September 2016: 06-07.078 S / 150-44.729 E 8.7m depth, Sheltered between and beyond reefs

We arrived, mildly exhausted, near Ambio Village and anchored between two lively reefs, in a mercifully sheltered bit of water.

As we approached our anchorage we could see hordes of children rushing out of the village and along the beach. They all went and perched on a rusty broken jetty and cheered enthusiastically. Gradually older people joined them, with picnic baskets...There were probably 60 people lined up, hooting and banging on the metal poles. Nobody got into the water to swim out...But a few small canoes did make their brave way towards us, and their occupants confirmed that there are...crocodiles. No swimming!

We entertained them briefly, gave them biscuits and bracelets, and sent them on their way...it was getting dark and we were...buggered!

## **3.9 New Britain Island – North and West Coast**

### **3.9.1 Gazelle Peninsula (Just W of Rabaul)**

**Westward II – December 2010 – Gazelle Peninsula:** Westward II made a 2 week cruise from Rabaul and around the NW coast of New Britain. Here are their anchorage waypoints and comments.

29 Nov 10	Escape Bay	04.14.993'S	152.13.220'E	
30 Nov 10	Watom Island	04.07.909'S	152.04.508'E	we didn't feel safe here
01 Dec 10	Ataliklikun Bay	04.13.268'S	151.59.272'E	
03 Dec 10	Dikurue Cay	04.11.302'S	151.34.692'E	deep (in 19m) shallows up quickly
04 Dec 10	Talele Islets	04.09.487'S	151.34.089'E	
08 Dec 10	Mattaserawao River	04.18.315'S	151.30.478'E	steep gradient
09 Dec 10	Tongaliekanei River	04.22.037'S	151.31.877'E	flat good anchorage approx 5-7m depth
10 Dec 10	Pokoloma Pt	04.27.137'S	151.35.804'E	
12 Dec 10	Tovanakuss Bay	04.11.835'S	151.41.155'E	on our 'worst anchorage list'
13 Dec 10	Ataliklikun Bay	04.13.255'S	151.59.290'E	deep anchorage
15 Dec 10	Rabaul YC	04.12.427'S	152.10.685'E	on yacht club jetty

We started out in Escape Bay where we anchored for the night in the lee of the volcanoes. It was pretty daunting looking up at these big hills, black, brown, dead.

In the morning we went for a walk ashore, coconut palms now bare poles sticking up out of the ash and rock, an odd cluster of green grass breaking the bleak landscape. Many piles of wood, neatly stacked, had been collected by the locals for firewood. We saw the remains of some houses and further around there were canoes on the beach and small huts among the debris.

Our next stop was Watom Island 16nm away. Here was one of the few places where we did not feel safe – the locals were yelling and swearing from shore, and we think using a sling shot to send rocks our way, luckily all falling short.

Even though the night was uneventful, we continued on at first light the next morning.

From here we explored the north and western side of the Gazelle Peninsula, finding some beautiful anchorages, with great snorkelling on the nearby reefs.

At Dikuraa the water was deep right up to the reef and we had trouble finding anywhere suitable to anchor. Here we had our first close encounter with a reef, luckily only resulting in a scratch on the keel.

We spent the next few days at Talele Island after navigating in through a small gap and anchoring in a pretty lagoon surrounded by reef and islands. There is no village on these islands, only a little fishing hut ashore. The snorkelling was great with many corals, shells, and reef fish, and an old wreck in shallow water.

We then went back to New Britain and anchored at the mouth of a couple of fresh water river resulting in some successful fishing expeditions.

At Mattasserawo River 2 large mangrove jack were added to the mackerel both Dragonfly and ourselves caught along the way. With too much to eat, we gave most to the village ashore. Stephen added a 4kg Jungle Perch to the tally at Tongaliekanei River, which was rather delicious!

From here we had another short hop to Pokoloma Point where we met up with another yacht who had been in the rally – ‘Stargazer’. We all continued on to Tovanakuss Bay via Rarende Reef, and then on to Atalikikun Bay.

Here we had swarms of people running out to the water and in canoes to meet us. We handed out lollipops to the kids, and they pulled the sticks out and blew bubbles in the water, they thought it was hilarious – we should have handed out straws!

Ashore, we felt like the pied piper with our entourage of children. Many people came up and wanted to shake our hands, especially some older men and they would then regale us with stories of the war, the Japanese, and the tunnels and old armaments in the hills.

### **3.9.1.1 Escape Bay**

**Westward II – December 2010:** 04.14.993'S 152.13.220'E Our first stop from Rabaul was in Escape Bay where we anchored for the night in the lee of the volcanoes. It was pretty daunting looking up at these big hills, black, brown, dead.

In the morning we went for a walk ashore, coconut palms now bare poles sticking up out of the ash and rock, an odd cluster of green grass breaking the bleak landscape. Many piles of wood, neatly stacked, had been collected by the locals for firewood. We saw the remains of some houses and further around there were canoes on the beach and small huts among the debris.

### **3.9.1.2 Watom Island**

**Westward II – December 2010:** 04.07.909'S 152.04.508'E Our next stop was Watom Island 16nm away. Here was one of the few places where we did not feel safe – the locals were yelling and swearing from shore, and we think using a sling shot to send rocks our way, luckily all falling short.

Even though the night was uneventful, we continued on at first light the next morning.

### **3.9.1.3 Liguana**

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** 04-11.53 S / 151-59.40 E. We didn't leave Rabaul until noon, so popped into a hole in the reef at "Liguana" and found a nice spot. We crept through the reef late in the day with poor light but good sat charts. There was no wind, no swell, and a grey glare on the water, so couldn't really see the reef at all, but had a good bow watch. Depths were around 35 ft in the pass and slowly shallowed to 20 ft where we anchored. Had 3G cell data.

We could see a fair sized boat at a dock just to the west of us. The guys hopped in the dinghy to check it out.

### **3.9.1.4 Ataliklikun Bay**

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** We didn't stop here, but did have cell coverage in this general area.

**Westward II – Dec 2010:** We anchored here twice, coming and going.

04.13.268'S 151.59.272'E the first time

04.13.255'S 151.59.290'E the second time

This is a deep anchorage.

Here we had swarms of people running out to the water and in canoes to meet us. We handed out lollipops to the kids, and they pulled the sticks out and blew bubbles in the water, they thought it was hilarious – we should have handed out straws!

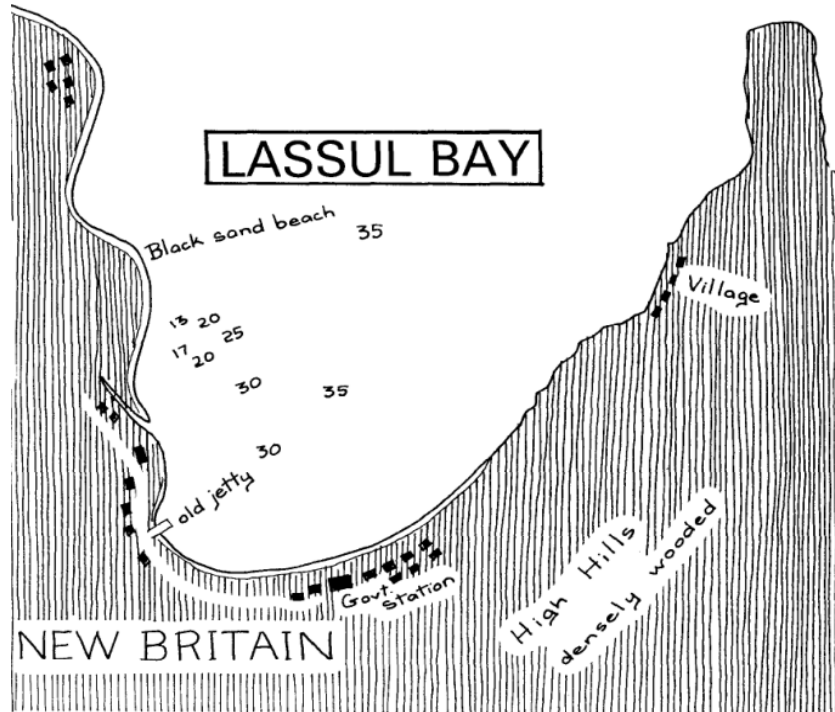
Ashore, we felt like the pied piper with our entourage of children. Many people came up and wanted to shake our hands, especially some older men and they would then regale us with stories of the war, the Japanese, and the tunnels and old armaments in the hills.

### **3.9.1.5 Lassul Bay**

**Patience – Nov 2019:** Lassul was pretty steep, rolly and buggy.

**Alan Lucas – Pg 187 – 1978:** Lassul Bay lies on the northwest coast of the Gazelle Peninsula and is the logical first, or last, anchorage after leaving, or approaching, Rabaul. The coast offshore in this area is strewn with coral shoals and islets but is easily navigated with normal caution and a regular lookout. There are beacons on those reefs close to the logical inner route through these shoals which were all in place in 1978.

There is a government station in Lassul Bay with a medical aid post and police station. There is no post office here



The anchorage is best over a rapidly shoaling sand bottom against the western side of the bay where indicated on the map. The steep beach here is free of fringing reef and provides excellent swimming despite clouds of sandflies ashore.

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** I think this anchorage is around 04-12.9 S / 151-43.1 E. Lassul Bay is not named on the CM93 chart, but is named on Navionics. We did not have cell coverage from just east of Lassul west to about 25nm south of the NW tip of the Gazelle Peninsula.

### 3.9.1.6 *Tovanakuss Bay*

**Westward II – Dec 2010:** 04.11.835'S 151.41.155'E Crappy anchorage.

### 3.9.1.7 *Notremal Plantation*

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** Rod in Rabaul had told us about Tony, a guy still running the Notremal Plantation. We were interested in talking to him as he could advise of anchorages and security issues between there and Kimbe. So we nosed in to the pier to see if anyone could tell us if he was around. Difficult english, but we understood it was a fair walk to where he was (can see buildings inland on the sat pic). It was getting late and the area off the pier was not very well protected from the NW winds we had, so we chose not to stay, and moved west to Rawende Point.

### 3.9.1.8 *Talele Islets*

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** We had intended to anchor at Talele for the night in Westward II's little reef enclosed anchorage, but found that the winds were not really as forecast (and weren't all along the N coast of New Britain). The forecast was for strong SE winds, but in the afternoon we had westerlies. Westward II's anchorage was exposed to the afternoon westerly wind, and

was a little small for two boats, and had a narrow entrance good for a shallow draft monohull, but maybe not wide enough for our catamaran. No cell coverage here.

There was enough protection from S and W on the N side of the islands, but we couldn't find a comfortable anchorage big enough for 2 boats, in reasonable depths. So we decided to check out coastal anchorages. (we ended up spending the night at Rawarende Point.)

**Westward II – Dec 2010:** 04.09.487'S 151.34.089'E We spent the next few days at Talele Island after navigating in through a small gap and anchoring in a pretty lagoon surrounded by reef and islands. There is no village on these islands, only a little fishing hut ashore. The snorkelling was great with many corals, shells, and reef fish, and an old wreck in shallow water.

### **3.9.1.9 Dikurue Cay**

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** We checked this anchorage that Westward II had stopped at, and did find at least one anchorable spot. It's a pretty little sand island with a few trees, and looked inviting, but there was some kind of gathering of locals (3-4 banana boats) on this tiny island (they all eventually left). With 10-15 kt winds out of the WNW, this didn't seem sheltered enough and had barely enough room for one boat, let alone two. We passed it up in favor of a more sheltered location.

**Westward II – Dec 2010:** 04.11.302'S 151.34.692'E Anchored in 19m, shallows up quickly.

### **3.9.1.10 Rawarende Point**

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** 04-11.62 S 151-32.38 E After checking out both Talele and Dikurue Cay, we decided we wanted more protection—both from the SE and the NW, so we picked a spot using satellite charts just SE of Rawarende Point. We anchored in 40 ft nice flat bottom, and were well protected from most directions. No cell coverage until we got 25 miles SW of Cape Pomas the next day.

### **3.9.1.11 Cape Pomas**

**Alan Lucas – Pg 187 – 1978:** (no illustration): The sand cay at the gap in the reef directly off Cape Pomas is the entrance to the inner route along the northwest tip of the Gazelle Peninsula. Logically, anyone leaving or approaching Lassul Bay will use this passage, and it will be found that Cape Lambert on Talele Island provides a natural transit for the entrance although this is scarcely necessary owing to the conspicuous nature of the reef beacon on the edge of the passage.

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** We exited the reef headed SW at 04-13.43 S 151-27.57 E. There is a marker (and remnants of 2 others) on the end of the reef, stay close south of the marker for the deepest water. With heavy NW swell, this passage might be a little exciting, as it gets down to about 25 ft deep.

There is a slightly deeper passage just north at 04-13.05 S 151-27.39 E. Our friends used that and found a little deeper water.

### **3.9.1.12 Mattaserawao River**

**Westward II – Dec 2010:** 04.18.315'S 151.30.478'E steep gradient

At Mattasserawo River 2 large mangrove jack were added to the mackerel both Dragonfly and ourselves caught along the way. With too much to eat, we gave most to the village ashore.

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** We did not anchor here, but had no cell coverage a little ways offshore.

### 3.9.1.13 Tongaleikanei River

**Westward II – Dec 2010:** 04.22.037'S 151.31.877'E This is a flat good anchorage approx 5-7m depth.

We added a 4kg Jungle Perch to the fishing tally at Tongalieikanei River, which was rather delicious!

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** We did not anchor here, but had no cell coverage a little ways offshore.

### 3.9.1.14 Pokoloma Point

**Westward II – Dec 2010:** 04.27.137'S 151.35.804'E This was as far south as we got. From here we turned around and retraced our steps to Rabaul.

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** We did not anchor here, but had no cell coverage a little ways offshore.

### 3.9.1.15 Pondo Harbor

**Patience – Nov 2019:** Pondo Harbour was great.

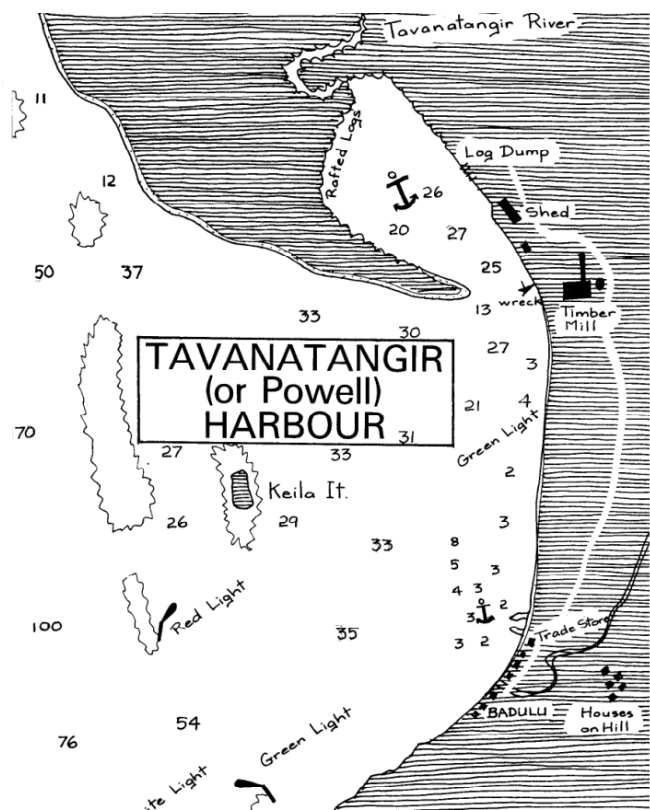
**US Sailing Directions (Pub 126) dated 2017:** Pondo Harbor (4°34'S., 151°39'E.) is between the reefs extending S from Pondo Point and the reefs extending 1.75 miles W from a position on the coast, about 2 miles SE. A small river flows out close E of the point. The settlement of Pondo is in the NE corner of the harbor. A small pier, reported to have a depth of 4.5m at its head, is situated in the N part of the harbor.

Small vessels with local knowledge can anchor, in 16.5m, white sand, in the N part of the harbor, N of a shoal with a depth of 0.6m, midway between the E side of the harbor and the spit extending S from Pondo Point.

Caution.—A spit, with depths of less than 1.8m, extends 750m S from Pondo Point. A deep channel, about 366m wide, separates the S end of this spit from a shoal, with depths of 3.1 to 7.9m South. Between the S end of this shoal and the coast to the E, there are some detached shoals and reefs, with deep channels between them.

### 3.9.1.16 Tavanatangir Harbor (Powell Harbor) & Badulu

**Alan Lucas – Pg 189 – 1978:** This harbor is situated towards the south east corner of



Offene Bay in North New Britain. It represents a fair hike down the coast for a vessel heading west, especially if the trade wind is well developed. This is the only decent anchorage within reach from Cape Pomas Reef entrance.

Perfect all-weather protection can be enjoyed in the "inner" harbor towards the Tavanatagir River entrance, where will be seen a huge log dump and mill jointly owned by a Japanese company and the local government. The depth is extreme and the sandflies can be bad on a calm night.

The best alternative anchorage during offshore winds is off Badulu Village where shoaling water over dark sand will be found. A small trade store is established at this village.

### **3.9.2 *Between Gazelle Peninsula and Kimbe Bay***

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** During our transit of this area (east to west), the forecast was for around 20 kts SE. We thought we have a nice beam reach in light winds and no seas. What we found was frustratingly variable winds that would switch 180 degrees in a matter of minutes. We had planned to take a fairly straight route from the NW corner of the Gazelle Peninsula to Kimbe, stopping every 40-50 miles at a reef anchorage (N side of Lolobau Island, Banban Island, just W of Lolobau; Wulai Island, N of Hoskins Peninsula).

But we found that light easterlies in the morning and then afternoon headwinds from NW to SW slowed our progress and also made our planned anchorages iffy. So we opted to take the longer route hopping along the coast, dodging patch reefs everywhere.

We anchored almost every night off a river, knowing that the river silt usually provides a reasonable anchorage.

#### **3.9.2.1 *Pani (Pandi) River***

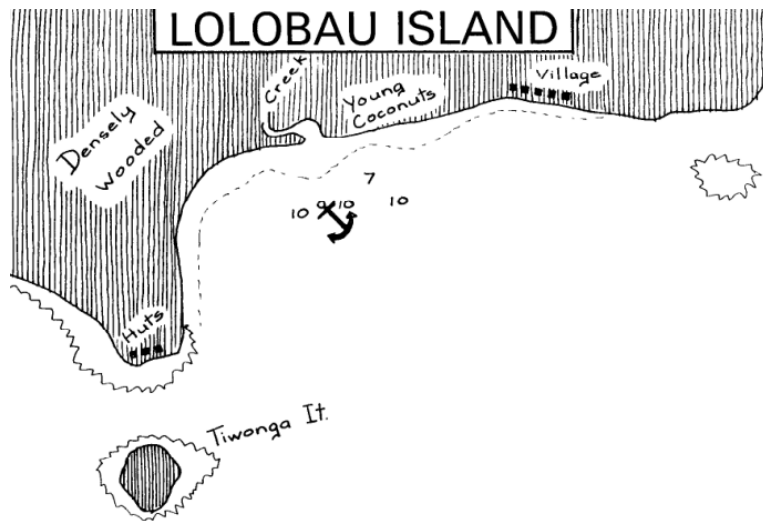
**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** 04-55.81 S 151-25.814 E 20 ft deep, shoals pretty fast, so come in slowly.

Coming from our last anchorage at the NW corner of the Gazelle Peninsula, we were trying to get as far west as possible. We had selected three possible anchorages around Kakolan Island (04-54.4 S 151-22.0 E), but when we got there, found them either exposed to the westerly winds, or not appealing (very poor village on the south side of Kakolan). We ended up anchoring at the crack of dark, just west of the mouth of the Pani (Pandi) River. Snuggled in close, we had adequate protection from SE-S-SW-W winds, and only a little swell.

In the morning, we did a dinghy expedition up the river, looking for birds and crocodiles. It was a cool river.

#### **3.9.2.2 *Lolobau Island***

**Alan Lucas – Pg 189 – 1978:** During the southeast winter season, just about any part of the north New Britain coast will suffice as an anchorage as long as some semblance of a headland is chosen to reduce the inevitable movement of water which is found even under the lee of a land mass. Therefore, from Tavantagir Harbor west, the visitor can do his own thing by crawling close along the coast and enjoying a fair wind with small seas.



Lolobau Island is suggested here only as a change from the coast and in no way is it recommended as a comfortable anchorage except in calm or northerly weather.

The best holding is where shown on the map which is also the only place around the island where reasonable depths will be found. The bottom here is patchy reef and sand and the holding is best using an Admiralty pattern anchor, although a mud type will hang on.

As a matter of interest, from this anchorage one enjoys a grandstand view of the active volcano, Mount Ulawan – also called The Father. It is known to give occasional stunning displays of fireworks. Also, in that general direction will be seen a sawmill and a mission run by the Catholic Church.

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** We were headed from our Pani River anchorage to the N or NW side of Lolobau Island, and had planned to actually try to anchor 5 miles west of Lolobau at Banban Island. In the early afternoon, the winds turned W at 15 kts (forecast was SSE at 15), and the seas started building—we were making less than 4 kts and weren't sure the anchorage at Banban would be viable, and the two alternate anchorages on the north side of Lolobau we had picked out probably would be any good either.

We had previously rejected Lucas's south side anchorage, thinking that it would be exposed to the forecast strong SE winds. We changed our minds and checked out the southern anchorage and found a really nice anchorage in a wide bay with lots of reasonable depths. (a few patch reefs too—use sat charts and keep your eyes peeled). Even though the offshore winds were forecast for SE at 20-25 kts, we still had westerlies, and this anchorage is well protected from ESE – N – NW – W – SW.

Southern anchorage: 04-56.30 S 151-12.67 E in 25 ft good sand with weak cell coverage from Kakolan Island. Villagers came in canoes from housing clusters east and west of us and traded various things (shells, some veggies). We only stayed overnight, so didn't get to know the villagers, but we found them friendly for the most part. One guy hung on the back of the boat and asked for things (money, fishing gear) but was unwilling to trade anything and wasn't very friendly about it. We finally gave him a small bag of rice to get rid of him. Seems like there is one asshole in every village. Everyone else was very friendly. We as always in PNG and the Solomons, locked up tight at night and had no problems.

The two other possible anchorages were checked by our buddy boat, Ocelot, who said they had anchorable depths but were exposed to the WNW winds we had. They ended up with us in the southern anchorage.

Northern anchorage: 04-52.90 S 151-10.35 E weak cell

NW anchorage: 04-54.24 S 151-07.85 E no cell.



### 3.9.2.3 *Bangula Bay / Planet Bay / Ala River*

Soggy Paws – September 2019: Anchorage at 05-29.08 S / 150-50.33 E in 37 feet. Plenty of room for several boats. No cell coverage inside the bay.

We left our Lolobau Island anchorage at 6:30am, with the idea that we'd try to reach Commodore Bay, about 50 miles west. If we had reasonable winds, we could do this easily, no wind and it would be harder, headwinds, it would be impossible.

Late morning we had a 180 degree wind shift (light SE, then light NW), and finally the wind settled in to on the nose at 10-12 knots (about 1330). So we fell off into Bangula Bay.

Our buddy boat was a little faster and got his hook down first, while we were still exploring. So we ended up anchoring very far into Bangula Bay, in a smaller bay shown as Planet Bay. There is some kind of big concrete pier and one small local house in this bay, As far as we could tell, there were only 5 or 6 family groups living on the whole west side of Bangula Bay.

Charles, living next to the pier, was friendly and welcomed us to stay. He said that we were the first yachts ever to anchor there. He also told us that the nearby rivers were deep enough to take a dinghy into. We stayed a day and explored two of the 3 rivers. The river who's entry was just S of us (Ala River?) was very interesting, because there are hot springs/hot mud boils in and around the river. That's probably what the ugly brown/black areas (seen on satellite pic) on the south side of Bangula Bay, east of us are—we could see smoke rising, but the area looked uninhabited.

There is pretty good birding up the river. Turn off your engine and drift/paddle down the river and listen for the boiling/glubbing sounds, these are the mud boils. CAREFUL going ashore in these areas as the sand/mud can be soft and literally steaming underneath. Sink a foot in the sand and you could find it scalded.

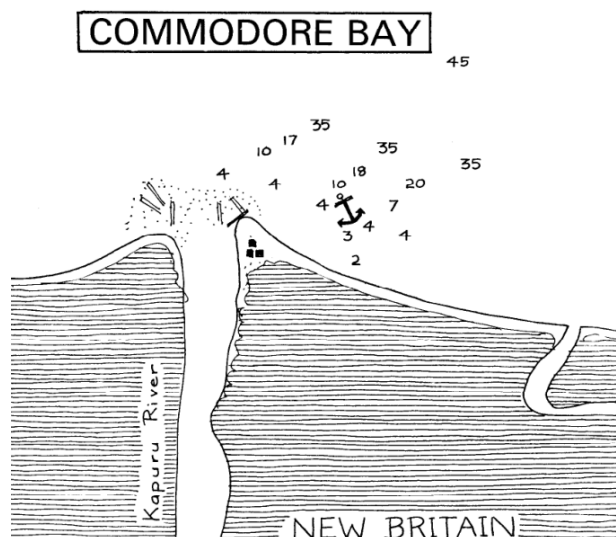
The river just to the north of us didn't look too interesting—not sure we could get in there, but the river just north of it had a wide mouth and was fairly easy to get in. Quite different in types of trees up this river versus the other one.

Poking around on our way in, there are several other possible anchorages on the west side of the bay, depending on which way the winds are blowing.

### 3.9.2.4 *Commodore Bay*

**Alan Lucas – Pg 192 – 1978:** Commodore Bay provides tolerable anchorage immediately to the east of the Kapuru River entrance where the ground shoals rapidly from 35m to 3m. Shallow draft vessels can enter the river if the occupants have no objections to mozzies and sandflies. Numerous logs will be seen strewn around the entrance.

The beach here is quite inviting but the surrounding water is not, being fouled by the outflow of the river.



**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** We had so much fun exploring the rivers in Bangula Bay that we decided to also stop in Commodore Bay, and spend a day exploring those rivers. As soon as we came around the point from Bangula Bay, we picked up some weak 2G cell coverage.

We anchored at 05-32.32 S / 150-40.28 E in about 25 ft sand, approximately where Alan Lucas recommends. There is a fairly flat shelf at this location (further east and the gradient is uncomfortably steep). Room for several boats.

The next day we took the dinghy and explored all 3 rivers. The westernmost river was wide and we went nearly 15 miles up the river before we turned around (still could have gone further).

The middle river is actually an estuary, not a river (ie salty water, lined with mangroves). We went a few miles in before the “river” just ended in a mangrove swamp.

The eastern river was actually a fresh water river. It got quite narrow pretty fast and then we got blocked by logs across the river, so only made it a few miles up that river.

There are a few families living on the sandbanks at the mouth of each river, and some banana boat traffic across the bay. All the boats that went by of course did a pass-by and gawked at us. One boat full of just men (and one overly forward guy) stopped and asked for a few things—drinks and food (without offering to trade, or act friendly). At the time I was quite scared as I (a female) was the only one on the two boats, and I couldn't raise the others on the VHF (they were too far up the first river!). But I don't think they were “rascals”—most of the guys in the boat were polite and friendly, just one guy was kind of aggressive and asking for stuff. I gave them a few bottles of cold water, and they thanked me and left. We had no other issues, and everyone we saw up the rivers smiled and waved.

In SE season, this was a pretty nice anchorage. Not sure it would be very good in NW season unless you had very light winds.

### **3.9.2.5 *Wulai Island***

**Patience – Nov 2019:** Wulai island was our biggest scare and biggest luck of the journey to Kimbe. s/v Aftermath went in first and ran on the reef at 4 kts, in the evening, at high tide. Stuck solid. The charts are wrong at East entrance. With lots of luck not breaching the hull during the night by stabilizing it with anchors and lightening the boat as much as possible in the morning and ketching it off with the incoming tide we made it to Kimbe with yet another “live to tell” experience.

## **3.9.3 *Kimbe Bay (Port of Entry)***

### **3.9.3.1 *Kimbe Town***

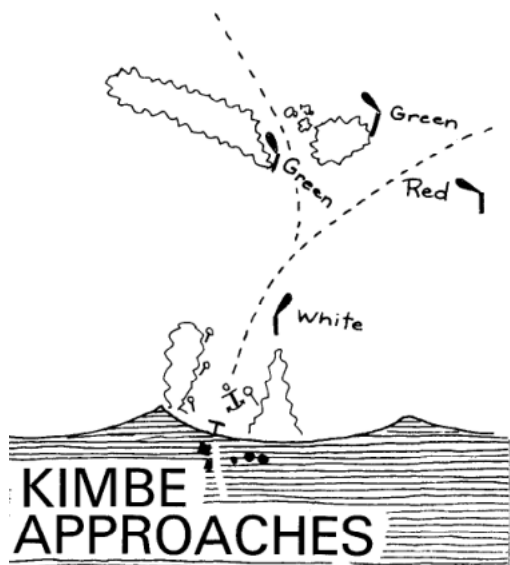
**Noonsite – Octobe 2018 – Kimbe Town:** A useful stop midway between Rabaul and Madang. Kimbe is the capital of West New Britain and is the 3rd largest port in PNG.

Cruisers should anchor in this area with caution following an armed attack and robbery on cruisers in Ndawa Bay, near to the village of Bulu Dabba in August 2012. Local police are said to have little interest in cruiser security.

Be cautious of unreliable charts upon entry into Kimbe Bay. Posts mark the edges of the reefs. If possible contact Walindi Plantation resort and they may be able to provide an escort.

There are moorings available that are managed by the Walindi Plantation Resort. 5° 32.833' S, 150° 8.778' E. 10-20m depth.

**Alan Lucas – Pg 192 – 1978:** Kimbe is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest town on New Britain. It was established as a port of the shipment of palm oil, and a typical palm plantation can be seen on the Hoskins Peninsula as you approach from the east.

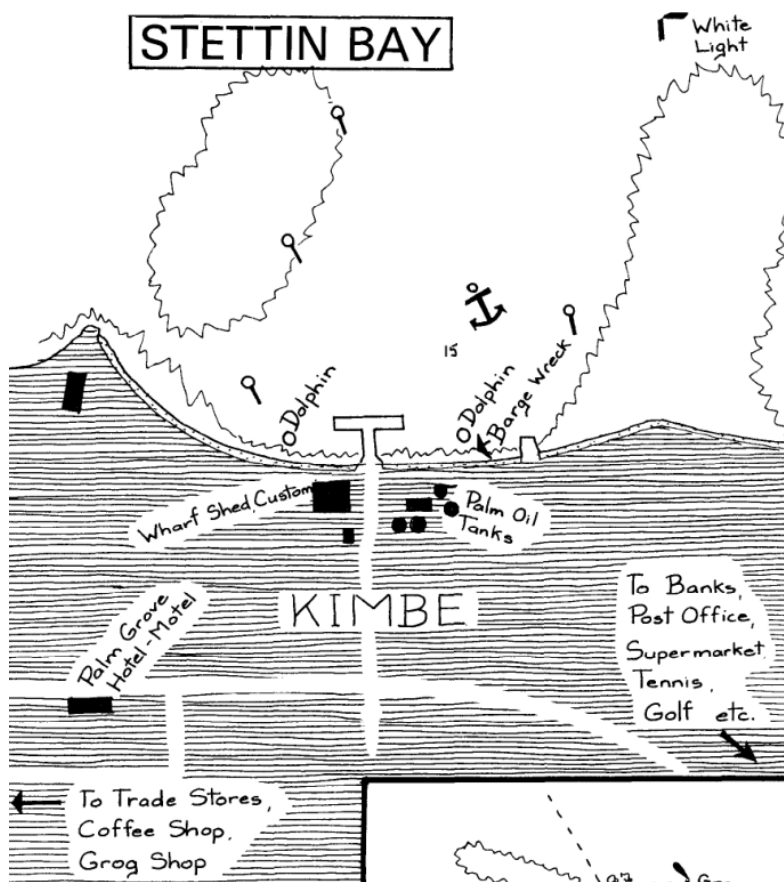


Although depths are not shown on the sketch chart, there is ample depth for any sized vessel to approach and enter the harbour. Large ships call here regularly.

The anchorage is comfortable where shown in 15m to the NE of the main wharf. This should be treated as a temporary anchorage so you don't get in the way of arriving and departing ships. If you wish to spend more time here, you should anchor further to the west.

The township was built on the old San Remo Plantation in about 1969 when the potential market for palm oil was realized. To the west and up one street from the Palm Grove Hotel you can find a number of Chinese-owned trade stores where liquor and basic food can be found. There is a larger settlement 3km along the road to the west, where you can find a golf course, banks, post office, supermarkets, tennis courts, etc. This road is paved the 40km to Hoskins Airport, which serves the whole area with flights from Rabaul.

There are many offshore coral reefs in close to the coast around here, and you should have a good detailed chart before venturing into it. All critical reefs have beacons marking the navigable side and are easily seen from a considerable distance. The final approach into Kimbe Harbor is to either side of, or between, two offshore reefs. Both reefs shown on the approach chartlet have a light beacon at their eastern end flashing green. There is also a red and white light marking dangers extending from the coast.



Engineering facilities are plain but adequate for minor breakdowns, whilst fuel and water are unavailable with any sense of convenience. You may be able to find these in an emergency, but you should not count on it.

**Soggy Paws – September 2019 – Liamo Reef Resort:** We came in to Kimbe Bay planning to anchor at Alk's spot off the KBSA Hardware store (shown on Google Maps, Alk's waypoint is below). But we also saw an area next to Liamo Resort that looked closer to town, and maybe in a nicer area. Liamo Reef Resort has a nice website and looked very nice, had a sandy area that looked shallow enough to anchor, plus had a protected small boat lagoon where we could probably leave the dinghy.

We were so surprised to find the folks at Liamo Reef Resort to be very welcoming...they obviously hadn't had much interaction with yachts in the past (ie no one had spoiled it for the rest of us yet). Everyone from the security guard who called to us as we anchored, the resort staff, the drivers, and the manager, were friendly and very helpful.

On arrival the security guard warned us not to anchor too far east... the village just east of them has a habit of asking for an anchoring fee. She suggested we move a little west to anchor right in front of the resort (but east of the reef that sticks out from the resort). We followed her advice and never had any interaction from the village. The security guard was always there on the dock at the small boat lagoon to welcome us ashore, help us to tie up, and assure us they would be watching the dinghies.

When we asked for confirmation as to where Customs was, so we could walk into town and do our local checkin, the resort manager offered us the use of the resort driver (at a small fee), and he was a friendly guy who waited for us at Customs and then took us to the 2 primary grocery stores for a short visit so we could see what they had (more on that below).

The driver also assisted us in catching the correct PMV (local bus) to get out to Walindi Resort (4 Kina for a 15-20 minute ride). On another day, they loaded our diesel jugs into the back of their pickup and took us to get cash (to 4 ATM's before we had one that worked) and diesel. Another day, we hitched a ride with the ladies going in to the market for fresh veggies for the resort.

They welcomed us to dispose of our small trash bags in their bins on the grounds.

Ramona (the manager and part owner) offered to let us use the resort's wifi, but we were getting good 3G coverage out on the boat, so didn't bother.

The only minor inconvenience for yachties is that it's a long walk from the resort itself out to the main road, and there is no shade on that street at all. So if you didn't want to pay the 20K transport fee for a resort driver, and they didn't already have someone going to town, it would be a hot hike. Google estimated it was a 20 minute walk to Customs (on the west side of the market in a building with an iron door, upstairs). Google Maps had it in the right position. The Customs office is NOT at the Port.

Once out on the main road, however, it's a short walk to the Kimbe buses, market, ATM's, etc. Passing mini-vans (PMV's in PNG terms) can be flagged down for 1K per trip in town.

We spent 3 nights there off the resort. As always, we locked up tight at night and left lights on in the cockpit. We had no problems at all while anchored there. There are 6-8 security guards roaming Liamo Resort at night, and they were happy to keep a watch over our boats.

Contact info: Ramona Southern, General Manager [ramona@liamoreefresort.com](mailto:ramona@liamoreefresort.com)

**Customs & Immigration:** We were doing an in-country checkin in Kimbe, which PNG requires when going from major port to major port. We did confirm that Kimbe is an official port of entry, and you can clear a yacht in or out internationally here. Like Kavieng and Rabaul, there are no Immigration officials, so Customs does the Immigration processing—this assumes you have secured your visa in advance (online, now) and have sent your notice of arrival to both Immigration and Customs (see the section on clearance procedures in Section 1). Because of the palm oil industry, there is money here, and quite a bit of commerce going on outside of tourism. Several ships came and went while we were here for a couple of days.

We surrendered our Customs paper from Rabaul to the Customs guy, and were given a paper that acknowledged our arrival in Kimbe and permitted us to go out to Walindi if we wanted to. When we leave, we need to return to Customs to either clear out to Indonesia or clear out to Manus (we haven't decided yet).

Contact info: Jeffry Landa [landaj@customs.gov.pg](mailto:landaj@customs.gov.pg) cell +675 7909 1051

**Provisioning:** There are two grocery stores we stopped in to check out—Welcome (formerly Anderson's) and Papindo. Both were at least as good as the best stores in Rabaul or Kokopo—we even found fairly fresh broccoli!! Plus we also found carrots, cabbage, onions, garlic, and regular potatoes. There was also a good selection of hard cheeses and decent meats as well, plus both had a bottle shop with beer, liquor and wine.

There is a fairly large fresh market in the center of Kimbe with all the normal PNG fruits and veggies, plus a few people selling fish, crabs, and squid. The only local thing we didn't find there, that we were looking for, was limes.

**Cash:** The cash situation in Kimbe is the same as other places we have been in PNG (Rabaul, Kavieng). The primary bank is Bank of South Pacific, and there are at least 4 BSP ATM's that we know of. I think there is also an ANZ Bank and a WestPac Bank in town, both with ATM's. Getting cash, however, is always a roll of the dice. If you don't get there early, there won't be any cash left. At 11am one day, on a diesel run, we had to hit 4 different ATM's (3 BSP and 1 Westpac) before we found one that would dispense cash. The main BSP bank in the center of town has a bank of 3-4 ATM's but that location was packed with people standing in line waiting for their turn at the machine. BSP allows max 500 Kina per attempt, and a 15 Kina charge for each 500K withdrawal. We were told, but haven't tried, that the big grocery stores will give you cash back on a credit card (that worked in Rabaul and Kokopo when we were desperate).

**Alk – May 2016 – Kimbe Town:** There is a small private quay from KBSA at 05° 32.73'S 150° 08.69' E, and they may be able to accommodate a visiting yacht. Good provisioning in town with well-stocked Anderson Supermarket. Good hardware shop on KBSA terrain.

### **3.9.3.2 Walindi Plantation**

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** We were dying to dive in Kimbe Bay, as we had heard great reports from other divers. However, Walindi is the only game in town, and has very high prices. We also weren't sure about their mooring situation.

So we hopped on a PMV going out that way (4K from Kimbe Town) and visited Walindi in person. They have a nice resort, with 3 purpose-built dive boats that can accommodate about 8

divers each, plus two liveboards that make week long trips to the outer dive spots in Kimbe Bay.

They assured us that they had recently renewed their moorings, and they were free for us to use (two boats) for the time being. There are currently 3 moorings and a dock. As long as the liveboard are making regular trips, they come and go from the dock. The only put the liveboards on the moorings when they are not going out again on a trip.

We just couldn't afford their list price dives, and so started to try to find a cheaper alternative. In Kavieng we had hired a "former" dive guide, a boat, and supplied our own dive waypoints (gotten from another cruiser), and had our tanks filled at Scuba Ventures Kavieng. This provided a bare-bones but very affordable way for 5 of us to dive the key dive sites we wanted to see. We tried to set this up in Kimbe as well, but it just got too complicated, and the dive guide was still working for Kimbe on and off, so it presented a dicey situation. We also talked to Ramona at Liamo Beach Resort—she said they do have a compressor and some tanks, and a boat, but the compressor wasn't working at the moment and the boat guy was busy for the next week (Liamo also has a charter boat that does fishing charters). They are hoping to set up a dive operation in the future, but obviously don't have one running now.

We ultimately appealed to Walindi for a "package deal" for 4 divers doing 6 dives each, experienced divers with all our own gear, and explained that we were poor cruisers with no jobs and just couldn't afford their list prices. We lucked out that most of their divers are leaving tomorrow, and the remaining divers don't fill a boat. So it is very cheap/easy for them to add 4 divers to a boat that is going out. They gave us about a 25-30% discount over their normal 6 dive package, to come dive with them on a space available basis. We knew we would have a substantially better dive experience going with the pros, and with the discounts presented, we felt it was well worth the price.

<http://walindifebrina.com> [resort@walindifebrina.com](mailto:resort@walindifebrina.com) cell +675 7234 8460

**Aluna – Early 2018 – Walindi Plantation and Resort:** Mooring: 5° 32.833' S, 150° 8.778' E – 10-20m

There are three moorings that belong to the Walindi Plantation Resort, you're welcome to pick one up. Be careful navigating through the reefs upon entry as charts are not correct but luckily there are posts sticking out to mark the edges of the coral. If possible contact the resort and they can have someone guide you in.

**Things to do:** Explore villages, see the plantation and why palm oil destroys natural habitats, have a beer or wine at the resort, diving, snorkeling, go to the city of Kimbe with a local taxi, ask the resort for their tours and toys for hire such as SUP and kayaks.

Orcas can be spotted in Kimbe Bay! There are no whale watching tours, which we think is awesome, but you might be lucky finding them along your dive tour or simply while sailing through this area.

**Supplies:** Take a local taxi or hire a car to go to Kimbe Town. Lots of stores and a market in town for resupply.

**Alk – May 2016 – Walindi:** Walindi Resort may have a mooring available but also has room to anchor at 05° 26.13' S 150° 05.32' E in 17m

Yachts are welcome at Walindi and water/fuel available. There area many good dive sites in Kimbe Bay. Check with Walindi Resort. <http://walindifebrina.com/Walindi-Resort>

### 3.9.4 West of Kimbe Bay

## 3.10 Islands in the Bismark Sea (Between New Britian and Manus)

### 3.10.1 Garove Island

Garove is correctly pronounced Gah-roh-vee, according to the people there.

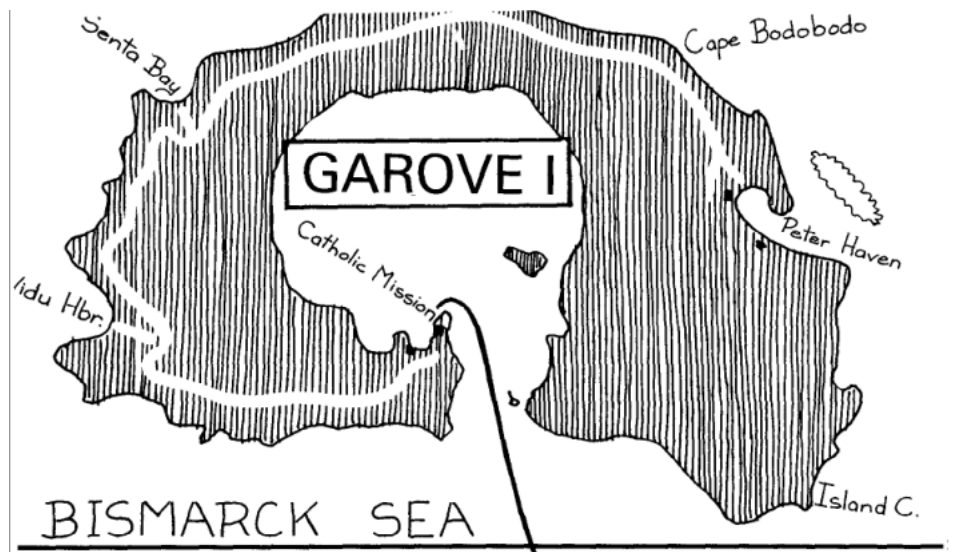
**Alan Lucas – Pg 196-200 – 1978:** Garove Island is a magic place with its anchorage and surrounding countryside straight out of a picture book. The harbor is actually the crater of an extinct volcano with access into the harbour through a break in its side. It is deep and commodious but only the southern part should be considered as an anchorage.

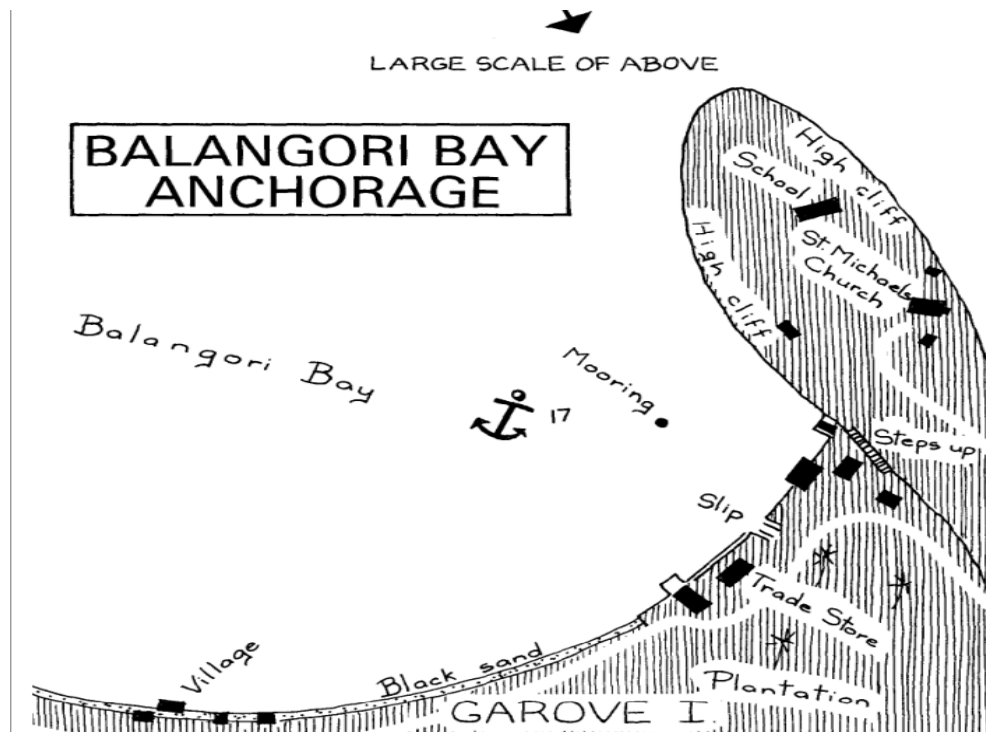
Alternatively, a vessel will find perfect shelter around the NE coast in Peter Haven.

The southern part of the harbour is known as Balangori Bay where there used to be a Catholic Mission.

During strong SE weather, the anchorage can be quite disturbed but you can make yourself more comfortable by taking a stern line to shore to hold the bow into the slight swell. The bottom is excellent holding mud at about 17 meters.

A rough direct road winds its way around the spectacular hills connecting up the many villages and plantations strewn around the rim of the volcano and a airport is situated at Windu on the western side (outside the crater). It is possible to travel by 4WD vehicle from the anchorage to Peter Haven.





**Peter Haven:** In terms of absolute movement-free comfort, Peter Haven beats Balangori Bay easily. In terms of scenic beauty, it falls slightly short. It is a totally protected natural harbor. The jetty can be used with permission from the plantation manager, if it is vacant. Otherwise the anchor can be dropped in about 10m, with a stern line ashore to somewhere near the jetty.

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019:** With conflicting information about where to anchor, we checked both of them out. The Balangori Bay anchorage shown by Alan Lucas has a fairly narrow shelf, and we were not sure we could get 2 boats in there without having to take a line to shore. Besides, we prefer not to anchor right in front of a village.

So we checked out the area to the east of Balangori Bay, where a small island appeared to have anchorable depths. It turns out there is a huge area with a flat bottom at 25-35 ft on the north side of the small island. We anchored at 04-40.764 S / 149-30.45 E in about 25 ft. The bottom looked like smooth sand on our fishfinder, but there appears to be some rock down there, as we can hear the chain grumble occasionally.

A few minutes after anchoring, we were greeted by Paul and his father Blaise who introduced themselves as the tourism representatives for the island. Both Paul and Blaise speak good English. They live in a small family village on the shore of the big island just next to where we anchored. Blaise offered to take us on a hike up the caldera to where a Japanese gun from World War II sits, plus show us a cave and water catchment basin that the Japanese used.

While they did not ask for an anchoring fee, when we went ashore for the hike the next day, Blaise had us sign his visitor's book which had a prominent "donation" column. The previous donation was \$500K (about \$125 USD)! It turns out that Blaise's visitors are a mix of a few yachties like us, but mostly commercial tour operators (dive boats and other tour operators). We explained the difference between full time yachties (with no jobs, living on small money) and commercial operators who were making money from the people they brought to the island.



We brought in a bag of “gifts” (sugar, rice, coffee, cookies). Plus, after the hike, we felt it was well worth it to pay approximately \$10 USD (K30) per person, so we also gave him some cash. As we became better acquainted, we also gave medicine, bandaids, eye glasses, etc. In the end, we were all happy with the relationship.

We also hired his boat to take us around to Peter Haven (quicker than going in our own boats). We supplied the 30L of premix gas, and they supplied the boat.

We took Paul with us in the dinghy over to the village in Balangori Bay, and he spent an hour showing us around the school, Catholic Church, and small medical clinic. It is a fairly neatly kept village. There are no longer foreign priests there, however, and the local priests have lacked the funds and/or the energy to keep things up. The store shown on Alan Lucas's sketch chart is no longer there.

**Aluna – 2018:** Anchorage: 4° 41.524' S, 149° 29.238' E – Sand – 10-15m

Great anchorage in a very protected bay, nothing but sand all the way to shore having the possibility to beach here. We tied our stern to a large down tree on land to pull in closer but there is plenty of room to swing and very calm waters.

Things to do: Not much, honestly. Explore the village and the church then simply enjoy the incredible scenery of anchoring INSIDE a volcano crater.

Supplies: Locals for trade, they love bringing their produce to your boat in exchange of coffee, biscuits, sugar, flour etc.

**Alk – May 2016:** Since the incident of 2012 reported in Noonsite, very few yachts have visited Garove. The incident was greatly regretted in Garove and the death of one of the attacker was felt as a relief as it was a 'bad boy' who put the community to shame.

Garove is a beautiful island with friendly people who welcome yachts.

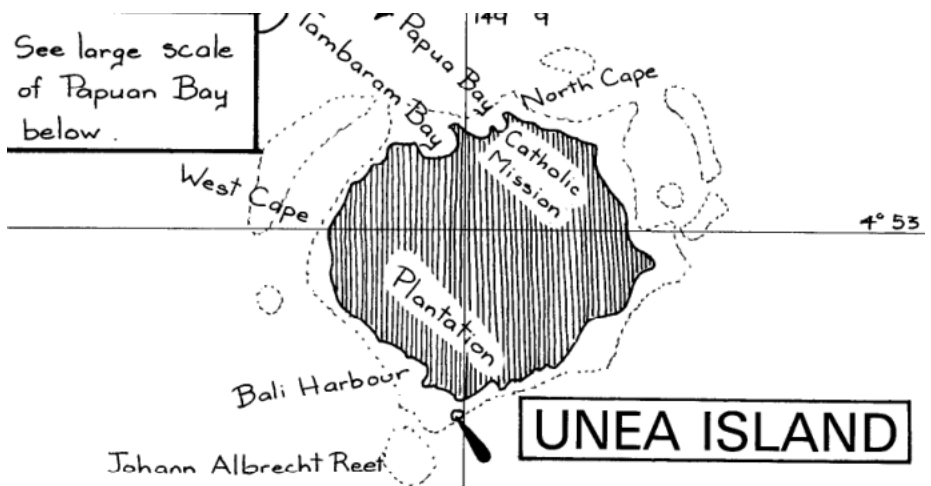
We anchored off Balangori village, got water with hose in the tank in Peter Haven and paid a short visit to PotPot, a gap in the coast reef at 04° 39.023' S 149° 31.475' E on the N coast of Garove. Here we were visited by the 'tourism chairman' and 'cultural chairman' who came to the boat to assure us we were safe and welcome in their village. They regretted seeing no more yachts since 2012.

**Vaa Nui – 2014:** We anchored in the Caldera. Beautiful caldera. Japanese guns on the cliff. People asked for money to anchor here, because the big liveboards come there from Walindi. We just told them there was no way we could pay, and they said OK.

**Gillaroo – July 2010:** Next stop was Garove Island, a volcano caldera which we were able to anchor inside of near the old German mission church. Stunningly beautiful island and got to do some snorkeling around WW2 Japanese wrecks – Katharine refused to go in because of the salt water crocs but apparently they seldom attack people so it was quite safe !

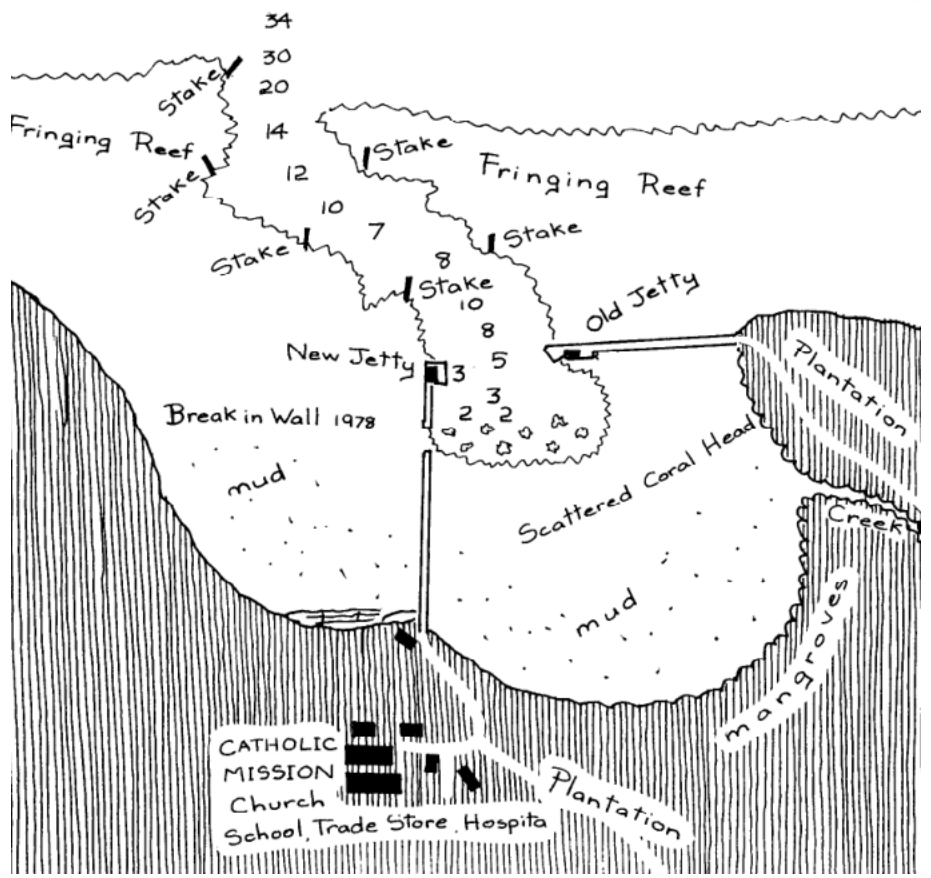
### **3.10.2 Unea Island (NW of Garove)**

**Alan Lucas – Pg 200 – Papuan Bay (NW Coast):** We sheltered here for 5 days against a gale force southeasterly so I can attest to the fact that the anchorage is extremely comfortable for such an unlikely looking place. Looking at a chart you would not believe that calm water would be possible here.



In fact the water is totally calm in the lagoon formed by the fringing reef which extends offshore from Papua Bay. Unfortunately the area is too restrictive for free anchoring giving the visitor no alternative but to go alongside the one and only jetty.

The jetty is not connected to the land, so one needs a dinghy to go ashore to the German Catholic Mission.



**Alan Lucas – Pg 201 – Bali Harbor (SW Coast):** Bali Harbour lies on the south coast of Unea Island and contains a large wharf for the loading of copra from the European owned and managed Bali Plantation. I did not visit this harbor but understand it to be tolerable in heavy weather.

### **3.11 Duke of York Islands**

#### **3.11.1 Mioko Island**

**Patience – November 2019:** After Rabaul we moved on to Mioko island at the Dukes. Beautiful anchorage. We were three boats at the time and one boat was asked for 50 Kina anchoring fee. Patience and Aftermath were not, we did some trading with the locals and had a great time. We made the all present kids sing for the Lollies they requested and toured the island. A bad taste was picked up when one cruiser was offered a ~ 15 yr old girl for prostitution.

**Soggy Paws – Mar 2019:** After an overnight from Kavieng, on arrival at Mioko Harbor, we were asked for an anchoring fee of 20 Kina. A young man without much English paddled up to us and handed us an “invoice”, stamped and signed by a local woman. We refused to pay the fee without seeing paperwork proving the fee was legitimate and knowing what it was going toward, but our buddy boats all did. One of our boats was actually first asked for a 500 Kina anchoring fee!! Apparently the local council has decided that passing yachts are a good source of income.

Later a guy in a canoe who said he was a teacher at the school, warned us not to pay (or donate) any fee that was supposedly going to the school, without seeing the ledger book that the school keeps. Apparently some unscrupulous people have solicited a donation for the school that never found its way to the school.

Just at sunset, the head of the council, who was aboard one of our buddy boats, suggested that two of us who had anchored further out in the bay, move in closer to the village. He was concerned about boardings and theft during the night, and said his people would keep an eye on us.

The anchor spot where we first anchored was 04-13.68 S / 152-27.13 E, in 42 ft, scattered coral heads. We moved to 04-13.88 S / 152-27.12 E.

We left for Rabaul the next morning, but our buddy boats stayed another night. Apparently there is an opportunity to swim with dugongs (guided by a villager). They stayed to do so, but only saw one dugong from the surface.

**2XS – August 2016:** 04-13.959S / 152-27.072E 7.9m It was only a few hours from Rapopo Bay to Mioko Island (Duke of York group.) Our anchorage was just beautiful, right up close to the beach with its glorious big shady trees, and with a big surf break just around the corner.

James, the local chief, came to visit. He has banned all of the islanders from visiting and coming aboard 2XS unless specifically invited...This is a direct result of the theft of Peter Frappell's iPhone. It made for a very peaceful time on Mioko Island...

We went for a long walk through the village, trailed and accompanied all the way by darling Jacqui with her little sister (Nora?) and a friend/cousin, not sure of her name...When we finally got back to 2XS, Jacqui said, very confidently, “We come to your boat.” And so they did, riding

triumphantly in the dinghy. We gave them lunch, cold drinks, bracelets, and one new item of clothing each. They were hysterical with joy...

Mioko is very heavily populated – around 5,000 people. Lots of gorgeous hair – red, golden blonde, black, brown.

Lots of people stopped us for a chat, and we asked permission to take photos, for example, of the local beauty salon...

At the school we met a wonderful, dignified lady called Dora, whose daughter Janice teaches Grade Seven. Dora, I think, sits under a shady tree and acts as babysitter and teachers' aide. She was, she said, educated by Australian teachers, and she loved them. She spoke beautiful English.

Joseph, a Grade Seven student, designated himself as our tour guide. He took us solemnly through school and to the beach – how lovely this island, is for the children, with its clear blue water, white beaches, shady trees!

And then back to the schoolrooms. Joseph said, very solemnly, "And now it is the conclusion of our observations."

We visited the Grade Seven classroom in the afternoon. Pete gave a brief talk and I read a kiddiebook about Australian wildlife, which they seemed to enjoy. Grade Seven students are much older here than in Australia – some of them are strapping young things, at least sixteen years old or more...

**Anui – September 2011:** I am starting to write this sitting in an anchorage in the Duke of York islands near Rabaul in a small bay surrounded by villages. There are a few canoes of kids hanging around the boat and the morning has been the usual stream of trading – today for oranges, cooking bananas, shells, coconuts, papaya and green beans.

Scott and Finn went off in a local boat to see some Japanese bombs left over from WWII. This whole region is full of sunken wrecks and jungle-hidden relics from the last two wars. Poor Papua New Guinea was really hit hard. On this island, the locals had to go and hide out the years of WWII in caves, hiding their babies and disguising the smoke from their fires as best they could. If the Japanese saw the smoke, they would throw a grenade. It seems that when the Japanese eventually beat a retreat they jettisoned their planes and tanks and left them to become new reefs and for people like us to snorkel on. This week alone we have dived on two tanks, several boats and a plane.

We've been warmly welcomed by the people of Duke of York, especially here at Mioko island. Yesterday Scott went to the local touch football final, attended by almost everyone on the island. The match eventually had to be abandoned due to intra-village arguing over the score, but that is apparently quite normal. Today we were invited to visit a lovely man and his wife (Mr and Mrs Iona Alipet) who are building homestay cottages on their part of the beach. They presented us with bags of fresh vegetables and then we talked the afternoon away. This afternoon I was visited by two canoes of young girls who had noticed my painted toenails and had raided their gardens for tomatoes and chillies to exchange for nail varnish!

### **3.11.2 Makada Harbor**

**US Sailing Directions – 2017:** Makada Harbor, between the NW side of Duke of York Island and Makada Island, can be entered from the NW or SW. It is suitable only for small vessels with local knowledge and with favorable light. Mission stations are situated along the shores of the bay.

Tides & Currents.—Springs rise 0.9m and neaps rise 0.6m in Makada Harbor. The flood current runs about 7 hours to the N and the ebb 3.5 hours to the S at a rate of 1 knot to 3 knots.

The tidal current sets strongly through the SW entrance.

**2XS – August 2016:** 04-08.178S / 152-26.829E 5.8m We left Mioko Island after breakfast and are anchored in a tranquil bay in clear shallow water off a large village on one of the other Duke of York Islands. But we can't stay the night as Pete has a wound on his foot that is starting to look infected.

### **3.12 New Ireland & Close Islands – East Side**

#### **3.12.1 Kaveing (Port of Entry)**

**Obiwan – Oct 2022 – Emergency Stop for Fuel:** Anchorage **2° 35,050'S 150° 46,888'E**

After Louisiades and Budi Budi atoll we head to Solomons Islands. From there we planned to reach Biak in Indonesia, without stopping in PNG again.

So we cleared out of Solomon and head west. Of course we filled up our tank and all ours jerry cans with diesel but we found no wind at all and we were running out of diesel.

Reading the compendium we found the email of Nusa Resort in Kavieng and asked for their help to stop for re-fueling. So we wrote them with our ssb radio email.

They answered pretty soon and they kindly advised Custom of our arrival. So custom allowed us to stop for re-fuel.

We anchored in front of the resort. We called them at our arrival and they sent us a motor boat to guide us inside the anchorage. We had a nice dinner at the resort and the morning after the same speed boat took us in town where a custom officer meet us and the dock.

He asked for a copy of our passports and for our clear out from Solomons. Then he allowed us to stay as long as we wanted. He gave us his phone number and asked us to call when we would be ready to go.

So we stayed for 3 days enjoying the resort facilities (Showers, laundry, diesel, nice restaurant, mangrove tour)

In town we made some provisions in the well stocked supermarkets and visited the pharmacy to buy medicines to prevent malaria.

The day before leaving, we visited custom office, they stamped our passports and give us our the clear out from PNG.

We asked him if we could stop to Manus, Ninigo and Hermits before leaving the country and he answered we could stop without problems. He also promised to advise Army base in Manus that we were arriving, but never did.

Kavieng custom officer Richard Amos +67571415819

**Soggy Paws – June 2019 – Applying for a Visa in Advance:** There is now a website where you can apply for a PNG Visa in Advance.

<https://evisa.ica.gov.pg/evisa/account/Apply>

(the base website is <https://ica.gov.pg/> )

Note that there is a separate visa for “Yachtpersons” instead of the Easy Visitor Permit. This is a 60 day visa with a possible 30 day extension. I don’t know if the 30-day restriction for Aussies applies to this visa. I also don’t know if it ONLY applies to the “Captain”, or whether it might extend to the “crew” as well.

**Soggy Paws – Feb 2019 – Clearance in to Kavieng:** There is no longer an Immigration officer in Kavieng. We emailed Jason from Scuba Ventures Kavieng asking if we could clear in in Kavieng without a visa (we had visas, but 2 of our boats did not). Jase came back with this information:

*“Consider this information SPECIFIC to arriving in Kavieng as FIRST Port of Call. Kavieng does not have an immigration officer - Customs only. This is the process we've identified with Customs in Kavieng and Immigration in Rabaul/Kokopo to allow you to arrive in Kavieng and get an electronic visa on arrival.*

*Fill out the attached form and email Mr Dennis Badi, OIC Immigration Rabaul dbadi@immigration.gov.pg +675 7441 2713. He will enter you into the system as a free "electronic visa on arrival"*

*- Non-australians get sixty days and can extend for K100.*

*- Australians get 30 days and cannot extend - they must leave the country and re-enter.*

*Then sail into Kavieng and report to Kavieng Customs Office in town. Current (relieving until March) OIC is Daniel Wesley - wesleyd@customs.gov.pg +675 7986 9487. He will clear you into country for Customs and stamp/date your passport.*

*Sail on.*

*When you are clearing PNG for another country you are to email an updated copy of your form to Mr Dennis Badi again so he can clear you out of the system.*

*All the officers involved have been very helpful and are keen to make this all as smooth and painless as possible.”*

The “attached form” is the same one we downloaded from the PNG Immigration website (immigration.gov.pg). Form4\_Small\_craft\_electronic\_manifest\_v2.0\_dbadi.xlsx or Form4\_Cruise\_Shops\_and\_Charters\_electronic\_manifest\_v2.0\_dbadi.xlsx (it appears to be the same form with a different name).

So we emailed our forms (one from each boat) as we left internet in Indonesia. We had to guess our date of arrival in Kavieng! (it would be better if you have the capability, to wait to email your form a few days ahead of time).

At least 48 hours ahead of arrival in Kavieng, we emailed a “notice of arrival” (one email for 4 boats with all the info from the Immigration form for each boat) to [NCC@customs.gov.pg](mailto:NCC@customs.gov.pg) (NCC stands for National Command Center).

This email was then apparently forwarded to several people, including Cyril Pagol, the normal Customs guy at Kavieng ([pagolc@customs.gov.pg](mailto:pagolc@customs.gov.pg)). From this, we got back an email from Mr Pagol “*Your email is noted, and as advised, your visa matters must be sorted out with PNG Immigration as anticipated before arrival in Kavieng port.*”

*I again advise that, Customs does not issue visa on arrival into any PNG ports therefore your coordination with OIC Immigration Mr. Dennis Badi is very important so that you have the documents in order to avoid inconveniences.”*

We also received an email in response from another person with a Customs email address that had Form4 attached and said “*Mr McCampbell, please fill in your individual S/Y (x4) information, crews and pax on worksheet provided. Send it in prior on ETA. Will provide these to PNG Immigrations of Entry Permits (Visas). If you have already being issued with this infor, fine. FYI Only*”.

When we cleared in with Kavieng Customs, they wanted a copy of our boat registration, a crew list, and a copy of our passports, plus the Customs clearance from Indonesia. We also had a printed copy of the Immigration form. They stamped our passports with date of arrival. No fee at Customs or Immigration. Later we finally found the Quarantine guy in his office, and got our Q clearance for \$56 Kina per boat.

Leaving Kavieng, we re-visited Customs and received a port clearance to Rabaul.

**Soggy Paws – Mar 2019 – Kavieng Services:** We anchored off the Nusa Island Resort at 02-35.03 S / 150-46.90E.

The resort was friendly and welcoming, but expensive. They welcomed us to bring our dinghies in to their beach and take one of their “banana boats” (water taxi) to Kavieng proper. They also welcomed us to come in to their bar and for their nightly buffet dinner, which cost about \$28 USD per person. The total bill for 2 people with drinks and dinner was \$67, (they accept credit cards). You need to tell them by 1pm if you are coming in for dinner. The buffet menu varies, but was always good.

Go in in your dinghy and check in with the office—they gave us a writeup specifically for visiting yachts. They use VHF 69 for their working channel, so stay off 69 unless you are communicating with them. With 4 boats and 8 people, we used their banana boat several times for trips to shore. The cost for us for the whole boat was K50 for a round trip—split across 4 boats, that was not too bad. They dropped us on the beach next to the market, and when we were ready to come back, we radioed them on 69 and they sent the boat to pick us up.

You can take a “local” banana boat (not from the resort) for around 1-3K per person. In the mornings and late afternoons, these boats are PACKED with people coming and going from Kavieng to the island (literally standing room only). But like a shared taxi, in the middle of the day, you will wait around until the boat driver has enough people to make the trip worthwhile. On a slow day, this could take an hour.

It is also not too far to dinghy across to the market, though we felt that we needed to leave someone with the dinghies for security (not sure this was absolutely necessary). After we met

Jason at Scuba Ventures Kavieng, he invited us to use his dock (but this is a fairly long way from the market and town, and they have 4 rambunctious dogs in their compound for security).

**Provisioning:** It had been a month or so since we had left Biak in Indonesia. Though we got fruits and veggies from several locations we stopped between Biak and Kavieng, we were all running low on certain things. You can find most of the basics in Kavieng, however they are out at the end of the supply line and everything is fairly expensive and sometimes they run out. For example, there was no cheese in Kavieng at any store when we arrived (a few days later, one store got a shipment that included cheese). Also, as we left, most of the stores were out of eggs, and the selection of frozen meats was pretty limited. Rabaul and Kokopo are much better for provisioning, so only get what you really need in Kavieng if you are headed for Rabaul.

There are a couple of hardware stores, but selection is limited. If you have time, almost anything you need can be shipped in. (our friends had 3 packages shipped to Kavieng via DHL, two were waiting in the DHL office in Kavieng, and 1 was stuck in Customs in Port Moresby awaiting payment of duties. After payment, the last parcel arrived within a couple of days).

**Things to do:** Nusa Island Resort caters to surfers and fishermen. We saw their boats going out around the islands in the early morning. If you want to go through them, they can probably arrange any activities you want. (their website has a few suggestions). There is a hike on the adjacent island to some WW2 wreckage. After getting specific directions from the resort, we did this on our own, paying a K5 fee to the person on the beach for access.

There is a “tour” possible down New Ireland’s east coast (see resort website for a description and their costs). We were approached by a tour driver on the beach, who offered to take us on a day trip. The 15 passenger van for the day (just big enough for 8 of us, our day packs, and the driver and an assistant) cost 1000K (this was a bit overpriced, we think, as we hired a similar van in Rabaul for 200K for the day). We paid a small admission fee at the place where the eels were. We packed a lunch and made a lunch stop at a swimming hole. At the end, we stopped in one or two places with WW2 relics in Kavieng.

**Diving:** After SE Asia, diving is shockingly expensive in Kavieng. There are two dive operators in the area—Scuba Ventures Kavieng in Kavieng town, and Lissenung Island Resort. Trying to get a “deal” we inquired of Jason at KDA about a package for 5 of us diving with our own gear. He quoted us his “deal” rate of K350 per 2-tank dive per person, and offered to knock a little off that rate if we committed to a 6-dive (or more) package, per person. KDA is a great dive operation and Jason and Jolene are knowledgeable and safe.

However, our low-budget buddies balked at paying that much for diving. We ended up hiring a local banana boat and driver, and provided our own waypoints and gear. Jason at KDA offered to fill our tanks for K25 per fill. The boat and driver and assistant cost K200 per 2-tank dive, plus fuel. This was quite a bit cheaper than diving with KDA, but after having dinner with Jason and Jolene and talking over the dives we did, we regretted in the end not going with KDA and their safe knowledgeable operation.

Lissenung wouldn’t even consider filling our tanks, as they required a yearly Hydro and all of our tanks were well beyond that. Note: KDA said that within a couple of months, they will be able to Hydro tanks.

**Internet:** I think Nusa Island Resort does have wifi in their bar, but it’s not reachable out in the harbor. We started picking up usable signals on our PNG Digicel phone about halfway across



to Kavieng from New Hanover, and this is what we used. You can also buy sim cards in town. There are quirks about using Digicel, see the “Cell Phones and Internet” section.

**L’il Explorers – June 2018 - Kavieng Check In:** Before we left the Solomon Islands, we went to Honiara and got PNG visas for entry. They are free to get, you just need to go to the PNG consulate with your passports. The consulate asks for a week to do the visas, but with some begging we had it in 3 days.

With these visas we headed to Kavieng for the formal check-in.

Checking-in was so pleasant, I first went to Quarantine, but nobody was there, so I walked to customs. Customs was very professional, and stamped the passports with no questions. When I returned to quarantine the officer was there, I filled out a form with the boat name, stated we had no pets or plants, and paid a 56k (\$17 usd) fee. There was no inspection of the boat.

See info from L’il Explorers on shipping something to Kavieng, [here](#).

**Aluna – mid 2018 – Lissenung Island:** Anchorage: 2° 39.900’ S, 150° 43.930’ E – Sand – 0-2m

We anchored on the East tip of the island in 2m sand and tied to a log on the beach here. There are moorings on the south-east side of the island but not available for the public. You can however anchor in that bay for extra safety, especially at night, the security will keep an eye out for you.

Things to do: Diving with the resort from Jan – April, Surfing from May – Dec, snorkeling around the house reef, help out the turtle project during nesting season from Sept- April

Supplies: No, some local fisherman may offer you fish and you can find coconuts on the island. The resort may offer to pick up supplies during their order if you ask nicely or arrange a banana boat to Kavieng for resupply.

**Field Trip – August 2017:** Clearing into PNG was simple in Kavieng. There are only two stops you must make to completely clear into the country, and you don’t seem to need to make the stops in any particular order based on our experience.

Quarantine is a small building diagonal from the fuel station near the market. It’s an easy walk from the market area where we left our dingy. You will turn to the right and walk down the road from the market. The office is on the left off the main road. It is not easy to see, but it’s there if you look.

Customs and Immigration are in the same building. They have moved in the past year to a new location that is on the main street where the larger grocery stores are located. We’ve also included this on the map. You will need to go past a guard of sorts and walk up a lot of stairs to the very top of the building. Here you will find both customs and immigration.

They will ask of your previous port clearance and stamp your passports. Note, that you MUST get a port clearance from Kavieng to your next port. In our case it was Vanimo, and we got this clearance the day before we left for ‘Vanimo’, while make a lot of stops along the way. We had no issues and it took 15 minutes for both customs and immigration.

**Screensaver – June 2017 – Nusa Resort:** 02 35.05 S / 150 46.88 E in 10m, Sand, 2G Cell service.

Nusa Resort has small lagoon/duck pond on the SE corner of the resort. You wouldn't want to enter there in darkness or when you can't see the reef unless you have decent Google images overlaid. The Lagoon offers further protection although while we were there the weather was pretty quiet. It was also far enough away from Kavieng that we never got hassled by local canoes and yet near enough we could take our tender across to Kavieng markets, or if proffered Nusa Resort would take you over and bring you back for 20 Kena.

They also do airport runs to and from and many of the typical resort functions, from diving fishing kayaking etc. My guess is if you ask and it's doable they will try to accommodate you.

Unlike many other places Nusa was also responsive. When I emailed Shaun before we came, I had a response within 12 hours, plus they do actually have and use their VHF radio's which also makes life easier. We ate there a few times and shared a few beers which was very nice and exchanged our stories. The prices in PNG are generally expensive, i.e. similar to Ozy in many area's, but in the end I think the prices at Nusa were quite reasonable, especially given the food was good, the bar was well stocked and the setting/environment was a nice mix of local art carvings history with a bit of western twist.

I checked into Customs at the end of the main road leading from the beach, which is all that was expected. All very simple, and made easier when the girl who checked us in was well into the Beatle-nut.

We did a bit of shopping but don't get your hopes up. This place is not big and perhaps arguably just a little better stocked than Vanimo.

The ATM spat out another 1000 Kena which doesn't last long, the internet was topped up, another fishing lure acquired.

On our way from Manus to Kavieng we had come down the west coast of New Hanover as I expect the swell to come from the east and the passage on the east coast between Tsoilaunung, Tsalui and New Hanover looked messy with lots of shallows and plenty of places to get into trouble. However with a bit of local Knowledge and a real chart from Luke at Nusa we changed our minds.

**2XS – July 2016:** 02-34.815S / 150-47.372E 6.2m Another overnighter with no autopilot and with the Raymarine screen turning itself on and off. This is so very much NOT fun at 4am, when humans are at their lowest ebb! But the sea was calm, the wind slight, so it was just tedious rather than dangerous.

And we got to Kavieng, a nice little town with several supermarkets bursting with tinned spam in many manifestations.

We thought we would go to Immigration and Customs, and the supermarkets. The latter were open, thank goodness, but everything else was shut because guess what – it was a public holiday! Yes again we have arrived exactly on time to find everything shut up like a clam. And nobody can ever again tell me Australia has too many public holidays! NOT compared to the rest of the world, we don't!

I managed to get some load for my modem and it works like a treat for about three minutes and then shuts down for many hours. Very annoying...This makes it particular hard to book airline tickets, which usually requires several hours of concentrated attention in cyberspace!

In one of the supermarkets I saw a small toddler boy with a low-slung trolley basket. He was slamming packets of biscuits into it, most industriously. Nobody stopped him! When it was fully loaded he pushed the trolley importantly down the aisle and around the shop, with a few dreamy women looking at him fondly.

We stopped briefly in the one and only pub before walking back to the beach where we had left the dinghy. I was very tickled with the dress code sign above the door.

In the bar there were about ten men, any one of whom might have been Joe Schulze – they weren't enforcing the dress code! (No shoes, many hats, many raggedy clothes...)

The next morning we had a visit from an official boat from the Port Authority. Noah Tamekus and Geoffrey Darius had come to tell us we owe 200 kina for anchorage fees.

Pete chatted to them nicely and I made them iced tea and gave them photos of themselves, which made them very happy. They are going to help us get fuel – quite a completed process, involving the filling out of forms. Very glad they are going to guide us through the maze of red tape!

They also gave us a lot of information about the region. They both said that New Ireland, and Kavieng in particular, are the very safest place in PNG. Nusa Island, a few hundred metres from where we are anchored, used to be a plantation, owned by Germans. When there was a gold rush (not sure of the dates of any of this...) the Germans all moved off Nusa and decamped to the gold fields on the mainland, and the government bought back the land to return it to the original villagers. All seemingly a painless process.

Apparently Kavieng gets quite a few visitors from the outside world! Every year a team comes from National Geographic. Bill Gates has been here, also Russell Crowe. And – the Bulldogs rugby team! Kavieng most passionately follows the blues and the maroons and the whole town shuts down for the State of Origin matches. I had noticed flags for sale in the shops but hadn't registered the significance.

There are a few tourist attractions not far from Kavieng, so Geoffrey told us. Apparently there is as place where you can wade around up to your knees in the shallows and fondle large eels...Another village has the tradition of calling sharks; they have done this for centuries. There are fire eaters in one village, men who walk on hot stones in another. All of this goes on regardless of whether there are tourists or not, which I think is great. I never really enjoy seeing people tricked out in costumes and performing traditional ceremonies just for the tourist dollar. Much nicer to have traditional customs continuing just because the people revel in them.

**Alk – May 2016:** We found a reasonable to mediocre fresh market but several well stocked supermarkets.

Arrive with PNG visa and clear in with friendly Customs who can do full clearance in. If you arrive without visa it may be possible to fly to Rabaul for a day and get visa at Immigration in the airport (Mr. Lindsay).

**Free Bird – Feb 2015:** The main anchorage near Kavieng is at Nusalik Is. 02\*38.8/150\*47. The resort on Nusalik is good for sundowners and advice. Kavieng was good for supplies with a lively market and decent shops by P.N.G. standards. There is a fuel dock south of the market with a small floating dock.

There are plenty of places to cruise and anchor in the area. Some we went to are; Nusalomon 02\*36.7/150\*40.8, Lemus 02\*37.8/150\*37 and Anelua Is. 02\*34.7/150\*29.5. There is a wrecked WW2 plane in shallow water near 02\*34.9/150\*29.3. Jonathon and family live near the dive site and will direct you to it. A fee is charged here but the people are nice and helpful. Also on the island is an old leper colony built by Australia in Queensland colonial style, it is now a school. Ask Jonathon about access.

There are many spots to anchor between Kavieng and here, this is just ones I logged or remembered.

**Tenaya – 2015:** For safety reasons we pass by Kokopo and check-in at Kavieng. The plan is to refuel, restock and be on our way in a few days, but we stay three weeks. The anchorage is calm, wifi is available, the people are friendly, the diving is spectacular, and there is a bar and restaurant at the eco-resort ashore.

People are friendly here. On the way back from Panakondo village we walk along the shore, introducing ourselves to those we meet. Our story goes something like this: “Hello, we are Jim and Katie from the yacht. We are Americans but sailed from Europe. The yacht is our home. We live on it all the time – for seven years now. Thank you for letting us park our home in your bay.”

They ask questions about us; we ask questions about them. We invite them to visit and are surprised to hear we are the first to do so. They assure us that Tenaya is safe. No harm will come to her.

Even in town, people are nice. Many say hello before we do. When Jim asks about buying 300 litres of diesel, Malcolm says he will find a boat and bring out a 200 litre drum with a pump, and cans holding the rest. It's clear that he doesn't trust Jim with his precious pump. He comes the next morning and is happy to be invited aboard for a cold Coke – he has never seen the inside of a yacht before.

Each time we part company with our new friends we say “Mi lukin yu behaen” – ‘I'll see you later’ in pidgin. When we leave for the last time Jayne says, “Mi lukin yu no mo”. Tears roll down my cheeks.

**Miss Behave – August 2014:** We arrived safely in Kavieng and are at anchor outside Nusa Island Retreat.

Our mooring Pos is: 02 35.067S 150 46.922E, mud bottom, good holding in 7 metres 100 metres from the Resort.

We had a great meal there last night and met the co owner, an Australian so naturally drank Bundy Rum and had a good time. I head into town today to see a repair shop who may help repair the pump.

**Later...** All good now thanks to a great mechanic here in Kavieng. We head for Ghizo this weekend. Nusa Island Resort, Kavieng is where we are anchored and I can not speak higher of the place. Sean the co owner and all the staff are brilliant. When they know you are not a grotty yachtie and willing to eat their food and drink their great SP beer they bend over backwards to help. Fanstastic is all I can say.

On leaving... After a splendid 5 days anchored off Nusa Island Resort we had to leave otherwise I was tempted to set down my own mooring and stay for a month or two longer.

Shaun and his staff were great and made us most welcome. We did frequent his bar and restaurant often because the SP Brownies (Beer) and the food was amazing. Monster mud crabs one night, lobster the next, fresh Mackerel the next. We had not had a good salad since leaving Hong Kong.

**Totem – November 2012:** Kavieng doesn't disappoint for a cruising trifecta of greats: surfing, diving, and resort-style relaxing. Couple that with a town has all the basics to top up provisions, and a resort that offers passive security while welcoming cruisers to enjoy the vibe and refreshments. It's no wonder people rave about this place!

Yet somehow, we didn't get quite as warm and fuzzy feeling here that we've had so far in PNG. Partly because it just wasn't as friendly... the betelnut juice stream that gets a little too close to be accidental, the kid on the wharf in town who needed a staredown from Jamie not to spit at our dinghy. Partly because during our stay, it was gray and squally: so the things that should be fun about being here were just a little harder to get out and enjoy, and the boat gets stuffy when we have to keep it closed up for tropical downpours. And partly because we were waiting for wind to continue west, but the wind never came, and the weather put a damper on finding fun as we played the waiting game.

That's not to say it was all gloomy. Hardly. I love poking around towns. With Emily in company, I tracked down the hidden customs office and second hand shops. The wax and wane of the public market through the week was always a feast for the eyes, and getting stuck in a thunderstorm just meant striking up conversation and making a friend. For snorkeling adventures in bay are a Japanese torpedo bomber and a sweet little reef with incredibly colorful, diverse fish and corals. Iona from Nalukai and I went to a special Thanksgiving service on Sunday, when congregations from around the area came into their "parent" church for annual giving... an event which pitted their choirs against each other (such sweet harmony!) and ended in a fantastic feast (best. fish. curry. evah.).

The resort on Nusa Lik is part aviary, and we never got tired of visiting. There's the old cockatoo, "Kaki", who is lame (broken legs, doesn't fly) but chipper and friendly and will talk to anyone in range. The hornbills, who are gorgeous and cheeky and will steal french fries off your plate if you give them a chance. The gorgeous parrots and birds of prey, and... the pigeon. Among these amazing, exotic birds- which are everyday features of this amazing country- the presence of what looked like nothing more than your average urban American rat bird was the truly exotic creature.

**Shango – November 2012:** Another two days of motoring had us entering the northern entrance into Kavieng Harbor on the Island of New Ireland. I'm not sure what we were expecting but we were quite surprised at our new destination. It was much smaller than we imagined and much prettier. The water was clear and pale blue and there were beautiful trees lining the waterfront. We dropped the hook off of the Market and after getting the lowdown on finding stuff from the Australian power cat Muscat we headed into town to do our business.

Earlier in the season when we would tell some of our Australia-bound friends that we were heading to the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea looks of dismay would cross their faces. Security was not assured. Several months later, after our positive experience in the Solomon Islands we were hoping to be pleasantly surprised by PNG as well. We certainly were.

We squeezed our dinghy into the large line-up of boats at the market, while many hands helped to secure us. Having acquired an arrival visa in Honiara, our check-in was one of the easiest we have ever experienced. No money, no forms, one official and a stamp and we were done. Locals took us by the hand and showed us where to get items that we needed. The smiles, although often red with betel nut, were wide and genuine.

After checking in, the next day we moved across the harbor to anchor off of Nusalik Island, home of the Nusa Island Retreat and a few very small villages. Half a dozen yachts were already at anchor but there was still plenty of room for us. The Retreat is very yacht friendly, providing easy eating and drinking possibilities. It also provides a home for a variety of injured birds including an albatross and several hornbills. It was great to be able to see them up close.

Meanwhile we continued to meet people who supported our impression that Papuans were dignified and proud. On one occasion we gave a dinghy ride to a particularly tattered looking Nusalik Islander who asked if he could catch a lift home from town. We said no problem. When we dropped him off at the Island pier he fished out several coins from his pocket saying that they pay the local boats to take them across and so it followed that he would pay us. We explained that we were making the trip anyway and there was no need to pay. Another day we had a chat with a young Nusalik Island man. He told us in an exasperated tone of voice of his attempts to open a bank account at the two foreign banks in town. He had to fill out seven forms and needed to have a driver's license to have an account. A DRIVER'S LICENSE! He was incredulous, as the resident of a tiny island with no roads or cars, that this could be the case. He then related that a local representative was trying to start a local bank which wouldn't require such things. He sounded very hopeful about this possibility.

**Endless Summer – 2011:** We checked in with Customs (a guy named Patrick in a one-person office in the middle of a gasoline refinery), we went into the city to buy food for this leg of our journey, and I got introduced to the wonders of betelnut and the Pidgin language.

After our day in Kavieng, we lit out the next morning for our island touring where I was anticipating great skin diving, a chance to meet some of the villagers along the way, and lots of time relaxing on the boat. One of the things you quickly discover is that whenever you anchor the boat near one of these remote, inhabited islands is that you are immediately met by a flotilla of dugout canoes fitted with outriggers (all made by the villagers from local trees). Men, women, and children all come out to look at the boat, look at us, talk to us, try to trade fruit or vegetables for things they need, etc. Just staring and making no effort to talk is also a favorite activity apparently.

**Anui – September 2011:** We had a good week in Kavieng, anchored off the resort opposite the town. Although we have been careful to research the areas we would visit in PNG, there is always the potential for some security problems, especially near towns. Resorts seem to offer a little protection for visiting yachts, as they patrol their beach areas and keep an eye on yachts and dinghies. They are also useful for locals knowledge. Most of them are set up to cater for people coming to dive or surf and make arrangements with local communities to pay a fee to use their beaches and waterways. Apparently in surfing season (which starts in October) in Kavieng you are not allowed to surf unless you are booked in and have paid a 10 kina (\$5) daily fee!

We've been amazed at how expensive things are in PNG – at least 5 times the price of everywhere else we've been in the past 15 months. I suppose they are Australian prices, but

they are must be crippling for local people. A jar of coffee is \$16, a single tomato in the fresh market is 50c and even a coconut is \$1. Local wages in the regional areas are very low (at the local copra plantation people get paid 60 kina a week) and transport between the islands, often used by those in paid work, is expensive.

The people we meet are friendly and smiling. Many smiles are marred by betel nut-stained teeth. Betel nut is chewed everywhere by almost every man and woman, with streams of red juice being spat expertly on every side. The nut alone doesn't give the brief rush of euphoria. It is chewed with two other items - a portion of green mustard bean and a pinch of lime (as in an ingredient of cement, not the fruit!) - which turn the betel nut red and give a rush which lasts several minutes. Chewing is quite respectable, with the nuts being sold from small tables in neat rows on every corner. The resulting damage to teeth and gums is horrendous. That doesn't take the shine out of all the smiles, though - the people here are so lovely.

**Forza – May 2010:** Although we were low on fuel we decided to try and get to Kavieng rather than Manus as we had been told the officials in Kavieng were not overly zealous. As it turned out we only just made Kavieng with hardly any fuel left. This was due to head winds and an average of 1 knot contrary current. Anyway, we made it using the northern entrance, least depth was about 5m and we anchored off the Nusalik Resort in 11m of water in pos'n 02 35.10 150 46.91. This resort is yacht friendly and meals and a bar are available. It is pretty low key and you need to give them notice if you are going to eat as they do a buffet style meal for their dive or surfing guests, they listen on VHF 69 and we spoke to a lady called Shannon, who is Australian.

This was our first town in PNG and we were worried about dinghy security when we went to town or the market. There is another resort close to town called Malagan Beach Resort and we left our dinghy there which proved to be a safe place. In return we had lunch there a few times. If you have the latest PNG Lonely Planet it has a fairly accurate map of the town and where to get things.

Notes:

- Fuel – there are 2 service stations, we picked the nearest one next to the hardware and pharmacy and they were happy to send a driver and ute to the Beach resort and pick up our jerry cans and then drop us back down again – price was 3.42 kina/ltr for diesel. We were told that it was possible to get customs approval for duty free fuel but due to our 'illegal' status we did not go down this track. We were also told by a yacht coming from the Solomons that oil was difficult to buy in the Solomons so we also bought gear oil.
- ATMs – there are 3 banks but only one with ATMs we had cirrus debit cards and this did not work, however, a visa debit card did. They will also give cash using credit cards. Good luck.
- Internet – expensive!!!! At Busiworks it is 48k per hour, make sure you check in at the counter upstairs before you get on the computers. An alternative is across the water from the resort at Scuba Ventures (Kara & Dorian) who have a wireless set up, it is faster but you need to take your laptop and it is still 48k/hr but on an honour system. Nusalik resort does not have internet available. Kavieng was the only place in our PNG trip that had access to internet.

- Market – this is visible across the water from the anchorage and is best on Friday and Saturday but opens all week except Mondays. Limited fruit and veg but well worth going, we bought a large smoked crayfish there for 5k and there was also live mudcrabs – big ones.
- Gas – we did not buy gas but another yacht did, however, they closely checked his bottles and rejected one for being out of test date.
- Shopping – there are 4-5 supermarkets with most things available and also a grog shop that sells beer and cask & bottled wine it is about the same price as Australia.
- Pharmacy – it is next to the hardware shop and has lots of goodies, in particular we were able to buy malaria self test kits here quite cheaply (around 12k each from memory) well worth the money.
- Eating – the Kavieng Hotel has great hamburgers.
- 'Giveaways' to buy, all the old faithfuls are still good ie pens, exercise books, old clothes, fish hooks etc, in addition sugar, rice, 2 minute chicken noodles and importantly, D-cell torch batteries (for 6 batteries we got 14 crayfish!) they like the ABC black brand and you can get them in boxes of 24 for about 40k.

As there were many stories of petty crime etc in the bigger towns, we decided to only visit the small island groups to the east of New Ireland. We did this in company with our friends Margaret and Douglas on 'Tonic' and had no problems with security and met many really nice people.

### **3.12.2 Emirau Island (01-40S / 150-0E)**

**Pacific Wrecks:** Emirau Island is located in the St. Matthias Group, nearby is Mussau Island. Emirau is eight miles across from east to west. Pronounced 'E-mir-a'. Also know as "Storm Island" first sighted by Dampier in 1699 and named "Squally Island".

Wartime History: A prewar German plantation and a Seven Day Adventist missionary station existed on the southern portion of the island. World War II first came to Emirau in the form of a Kregsmarine raiders Orion and Komet, who left about 500 men, women and children on Emirau in early December 1940, after the sinking of their ship, RMS Rangitane and Holmwood. The survivors lived on the island until rescued by Australian authorities.

#### American Liberation

On March 12, 1944, the Joint Chiefs of Staff decided to capture Hollandia and Emirau as part of the campaign to neutralize Rabaul.

On March 20, 1944 the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) 4th Marines, 1st and 2nd Battalions, with 3rd Battalion in reserve made an amphibious landing on the island. There were no Japanese defenders on the island, instead the Marines were met by 7 Day Adventist missionaries. The next day and airfield construction is begun. USS Anthony DD-515 covered the invasion of Emirau. Destroyer USS Wintle DE-25 was patrolling off Emirau on April 8 and April 21 1944. Also, on June 12 and 25 and August 28, 1944. The Marines were relieved by the US Army's 147th Infantry Regiment on April 11, 1944.



**Aluna – mid-2018 – Hamburg Bay:** Mooring: 1° 39.253' S, 149° 57.143' E – Tied to reef – 20-30m

There are surprisingly several moorings in Hamburg bay used by locals for sea cucumber fishing. We were guided to this one, being told it was the safest and most sheltered. As for getting ashore you must go with a local as there is only one opening in the reef and it must be timed just right or you will crash on the coral and rocks. It's genuinely a suicide mission otherwise. Fret not, locals will come to your boat and gladly take you ashore if you ask them to, it's quite a thrilling ride to say the least.

Things To Do: Local women in the village will be eager to give you a tour of the island including the church, schools, airfields, bomb shrine left from WWII, crocodile bones, local fruits, cliff overlooks, freshwater springs and more. There are 6 villages on the island and 1 truck, you are welcome to hire the vehicle for a day and have people show you around for approximately \$50 Kina (\$15 USD) but we chose to walk.

Supplies: Ask the lovely locals and trade. They are so off the grid here, they will be happy for ANYTHING they'll get. Special hint: Take newspapers from Kavieng or Lorengau when you come here. They would love some news!

Notes: We absolutely loved our stay at Emirau Island, which is located in a group of islands called the St. Matthias Islands. Prior to us they hadn't had visitors in quite a few years so they will be absolutely overjoyed to have you. Be sure to swim the water around your boat, this kind of blue and endless visibility is something you otherwise only get on the open ocean. It is truly incredible and left us entirely speechless as there is not that much food for fish, hence the awesome visibility.

**Endless Summer – July 2011:** We had been told to phone Pastor Wilson before arriving at Emirau Island so I phoned ahead and spoke to a very elderly gent. I told him how we wanted to visit the island and maybe carry out some eye examinations whilst we were there. We very nearly gave up whilst trying to get there as every bay just seemed too open, too deep, too much swell, too much reef, etc, etc.

We tried one more time to find an anchorage and slipped around the back of a small island on the south east corner which gave us some protection. We were glad we did as we soon met a very friendly local who was fishing with three young children on board his canoe who took us to an anchoring spot. His name was Douglas and he told us how he had the right to fish between the islands as his mother owned that stretch of land including the water in front of it. He knew of our impending arrival as Pastor Wilson had phoned ahead, the island had no telephone coverage but seemed to have some sort of radio service at the hospital. We told Douglas we would come ashore the next morning and he agreed to come back to the boat and escort us in.

The next morning Douglas appeared in his dugout canoe and he told us how his mother, her sister and the grand children were waiting for us and were going to give us a traditional island welcome. We weren't too sure what to expect but as we came around the corner there was lots of singing and dancing and everybody had flowers and palms in their hair.

It was a great welcome and they soon had us wearing flower chains and the kids were grabbing our hands with excitement !!

The island had a vehicle, just one, a truck which drove around picking people up and dropping them off whenever it needed to. The truck had been booked for us so we were soon driven off to the local clinic, it was very simple supplying basic first aid by a single nurse.

Jimmy worked in a very small room giving thorough eye examinations and I sat in the waiting area seeing people who just needed reading glasses.

We saw many people that day and they just kept appearing out of nowhere, word soon spreads quickly even without mobile phones. We worked solidly until the truck reappeared at about 3 o'clock, it was time to pack up and return to the boat.

We went back in the next day and had already agreed to go to a new location next to the school. We had a small hut to work in with a couple of rooms but it soon filled with people.

I seem to remember giving out about 25 pairs of reading glasses that day and Jimmy another 15-20 so it was a very productive day. Hopefully a lot of people now seeing a lot better.

After the great welcome, great hospitality and great kindness shown we were glad we made the effort to stop by and anchor there for a few days. Its always sad to leave places like this as its so remote you never really know whether you're ever going to be able to come back and visit again.

### **3.12.3 Manne Island / Patitaun (02-45S / 150-43E)**

**Screensaver – June 2017:** 46nm East of Baungnung, Anchor in 8m, 2G.

Watusi was on their way and needing a bit of break from Canoe borage, they took a night at Manne just South Patitaun and we joined them for a quiet night. No Canoe's was nice for a change.

**Free Bird – Feb 2015:** The Albatross channel 02-44.7 S / 150-43 E between New Ireland and Manne island is straight forward and anchorage can be found in many spots.

### **3.12.4 Lissenung / Lisseno Island (02-40S / 150-44E)**

**Free Bird – Feb 2015:** We anchored out the front Lissenung Island Resort (aka Lisseno) 02\*39.6/150\*44 and went ashore for a meal and to fill dive tanks. Dietmar and Angie were the owners. Diving and surfing trips and advice can be had here. Decent snorkelling is also to be found.

### **3.12.5 Tabar Islands (02-48S / 151-58E)**

General Location from Google: -2.9157383,151.944005

**Field Trip – August 2017:** 02 52.2S 151 57.0E, light wind SE

We arrived safely to Tabar Island. It was a slow but very comfortable sail. We averaged 4.1kts for the 88NM journey. Not too bad given the wind was aft of the beam and it was light.

The village here is not off the beaten path. They are nice, but used to yachts...so that makes for a TOTALLY different experience. The past six weeks we have been where few boats venture, and that makes the villages in our opinion more pristine and simple. Here in this village we have received a number of 'asks', like for clothes, or cigarettes, etc. While we are happy to help, clearly they are used to asking and getting stuff from yachties. We never received one ask in the

past six weeks until yesterday. Again, we are happy to help, but don't want to feed the expectations of asking and getting stuff for nothing.

**Screensaver – July 2017 - Simberi Island:** Simberi is 74nm east of Kavieng, at the northern end of the Tabar Islands. 02 37.72 S / 151 56.60 E in 18m, 2G cell.

I had my usual Google image in which I could see the bottom and had plotted a route up behind the reef, entering around the southern end of the offshore reef. To my surprise the Google image was seeing the bottom at around 25m depth of water. On a good image you get 15-20m visibility so this was quite rare. The water was probably the clearest I have seen in PNG so far.

We anchored near an old wreck ([SS Tintenbar](#)) and while history was my only poor subject I guessed old steam powered boats of this vintage was probably at least 70+ years old. There is still coal on the sea bed in places and much of the mechanics are still visible.

Simberi has quite large gold mine and one of a few Islands being mined in this general area. If you get offered gold nuggets on the streets (as I was) at 50% discount to the market value, be very careful. Sometimes cheap works but not always.... I am aware of someone who bought black pearls in Malaysia and later had them valued in Ozy at roughly twice the price they paid, so in theory that was good value, but I'm also aware of someone who bought a rather nice raw looking piece of gold, that actually had other minerals inside it and was just nicely coated and crafted in gold for the sucker.

A quick look around the reef we were hiding behind revealed not a lot of fish and while the water was clear not a lot to see.

We only spent one night here.

### **3.12.5.1 Tatau Island (02-47S / 152-00E)**

**Screensaver – July 2017 - TaTau Island:** 02 46.40 S / 151 54.88 E in 18m, mud 2G. Quite a few of the islands around here and heading south have fringing reefs that you can get in behind. The local council member stopped in on his way home chatting for a bit and these guys were educated not to bump into boats for a change. We got the various mine stories as we have moved around. Right now there is no mining on this Island, but plans are afoot. The locals have learnt a bit from others and this mining company that is to start next year must build roads, school, hospital up front before they start mining. Locals must get first options on jobs , accommodation for miners must be built and so this will no doubt bring some money and help to the island along with some destruction as well to the environment.

When you ask about croc's the locals will tell you different answers, some will say yes, it's fine. Others will say, no they live there and some will, say just don't swim dawn and dusk. The reef seemed far enough away from what to me looked like and ideal croc playground, so we did a bit of snorkeling on the reef. This reef was much more alive all be it mostly small.

We spent 2 nights here.

**Miss Behave – August 2014:** After an overnight from Kavieng, we motored through Saraware passage never seeing less than 15 metres under the keel then headed north to Tatau Island. We went further up the inlet and found a clean bottom in 12metres.

Position: 02 47.5'S / 151 59.7.0'E

No sooner had the anchor set than we were set upon by all the local village children and of course the village elder Sebastian who made us very welcome with a bunch of fresh coconut and assurances of a safe anchorage. After he left the children, having learnt what we like from Sebastian, returned with loads of chilies, egg plants, coconuts bananas and fresh pumpkin shoots. The children left on nightfall, arms loaded with tennis balls, pens, paper pads, rice and lollies. As the last of the light went I shone the torch on the water and no more than 30 metres away was an enormous crocodile eyeing us off. Sebastian assured us the village has never lost any children only pigs and dogs do missing. We slept the best we have for weeks knowing Colin the croc was watching our six!

**Endless Summer – 2011:** did not feel comfortable here. Thugs visiting boat, told later by local they had guns. Stay away. Nearby Mariwu / Simberi islands had nice people and great surf.

**Forza – May 2010:** We approached these islands from the west and passed through the Saraware channel where we had a least depth of 15m though beware of the central reef when exiting the passage, we left it to port. We caught a barracouda on our way around to the Mabua island anchorage. After transiting the entrance through the reef, turn to stb'd and there is a small bay, as per the guide, we anchored in 25m of water in pos'n 02 47.79 151 59.34.

If we went again I would keep heading further into this bay where it should be shallower, we went up in the dinghy. Also, if you have a crab trap, we caught muddies here.

As is usual, throughout the islands, you will get visitors in canoes who may have a yacht visit book to sign and fruit and veggies to trade. We never paid money only traded rice and noodles etc.

### **3.12.5.2 Tabar Island (02-51S / 151-57E)**

**Screensaver – July 2017 - Cigaregare Harbour:** 02 50.874 S / 151 57.474 E Anchor in 16m, mud, 2G. This is a small bay with nothing more than a village house. While it is a bit squishy with two yachts in there it is certainly well protected, and if you were expecting a big blow one could rig up additional lines to shore without a lot of trouble. We spent 3 nights here.

We moved a little south and anchored overnight at an unnamed cove, to get us a little closer to our next destination. 02-54.20S / 151-58.80.

**Adina - July 2015 – N Tabar Island:** 02 50.7950 S / 151 57.4200 E Mud, good holding. Ashore: Local house Cell: No Small bay with good protection. Visible to passing motorboats who often stop to talk or trade/sell. Friendly local family by concrete jetty up hill. Crocodile lives here but locals may have now removed it.

### **3.12.6 Lahir/Lihir Island (03-07S / 152-36E) Port of Entry**

**Noonsite – May 2016:** Located north east of New Ireland, Lihir Island is the site of a huge Lihir gold mine and is a port of clearance into PNG. This is a good place to clear in to PNG for boats coming from the Solomon Islands and by-passing Buka.

Every vessel arriving here is expected to clear in and out. Customs must be contacted 48 hours prior to your arrival and departure.

E-mail: [Lihir.Customs@newcrest.com.au](mailto:Lihir.Customs@newcrest.com.au)

Documents required on arrival include: Inward Clearance (outward clearance from last port), passports, general declaration, crew list and port call list.

Quarantine contact – Mathias Vovore

Tel: +675 71003074

E-mail: [mathias.vovore@newcrest.com.au](mailto:mathias.vovore@newcrest.com.au)

The check-in bay is located at 03-04.534S 152-38.012E.

Radio Port Control or the Harbour Master on VHF16 an hour out and on close – they will advise customs of your arrival.

The anchorage is exposed to SE winds and roly/uncomfortable. There is a fishing boat buoy at the given GPS co-ordinates which can be used if free, otherwise anchor in shallow water <5m.

While there is a pier, it is rough and you are better bringing officials to your boat than tying alongside – pick them up at the pier. Clearance timing all depends on whether customs have other commercial shipping checking in.

Officials are friendly and courteous.

Arrangements have to be in place prior to the arrival of a yacht into Londolovit, remembering that this Customs Office is purely for the operations of the Gold Mine, which is owned by Newcrest Mining.

Rather than anchoring at Luise Harbour or Londolovit - which both tend to be roly - it may be preferable to stop and anchor at Lakakot Bay, where the now closed Lakakot Bay Resort is located.

This small bay provides excellent shelter, but the entrance is narrow and you will need good light to see the reef lining the entrance. (Approach waypoint 03-09.077S 152-33.435E).

Anchor at 03 09.032S 152 33.645E in 10m sand and coral.

The resort is owned by Mark Bassani - E-mail: [mark.bassani301060@gmail.com](mailto:mark.bassani301060@gmail.com), who still lives here with his family but now runs another business. Email him in advance of your arrival.

### **Screensaver – July 2017 - Lihir Lakakot Resort**

Anchorage: 03 08.9833 S / 152 33.7833 E anchor in 5m, mud, some 2G.

I had contacted Mark from the resort prior and once again I had a good quick response. I could see there was a small bar at the entrance and as Mark had advised it has 5m over it at low tide so no drama getting in there. Again not heaps of room but enough for 2 boats to swing around and probably the most protected anchorage I have been in this year.

The rain came and went more times than I could count and eventually we decided at this rate we would never go ashore so we made the 30m dash. It's not really a resort at this time and it's pretty much closed although Mark and his crew made us feel very welcome. A significant portion of their business came from the mine and back a couple of years ago the locals, had enough of the mines promises and dug their heels in pretty much brining the mine to a halt and with it a significant part of Marks business. That's all pretty settled now so Mark will crank it up again, but mean time yachties are made very welcome.

Once again the people here all very friendly and helpful. We were greeted by a couple of the girls staying there looking after the place, and the cook invited us to dinner, which due only to the weather we declined. There is a small store on the edge of Mark's property which they opened up specifically for us and I broke the budget and bought a couple of beers.

Town (Londoiovit Put Put) is on the other side, a good 35k by road. The mine people were supposed to tar the road and I guess they did the first 8-10k, but the rest is pretty rough and ready. Sitting ( or bouncing) in the back of one of the pickup trucks we made the 1.5hr journey to town along with 10 or so others.

In some ways the supermarket here was better the Kaviang specifically in the meat department, and some western products I had not seen for many months, I guess a result of the mine. I could not bring myself to pay nearly \$70.00au dollars for a cheap scotch (JW Red) but I did succumb to going halves in \$70.00 carton of beer with Ken. Screensaver was now facing its driest period on record inside, and new records for its wettest period were being set outside.

We managed a bit of walk around the local area between what seems to be never ending rain and I'm not looking forward to the rest of the wet season. This year it is crazy much more rain than prior years. I have grib files going back about 6 or 7 years and this year is by far the wettest.

Hopefully after August things will settle down a bit.

**Pelican – 2014 (from Noonsite):** Lakakot Bay resort is very welcoming of cruisers. Mark is offering hydroponic vegetables & salad greens at very reasonable prices, eggs from the chickens he has just flown in from NZ ! and beer and wine. There is a narrow entry between two reefs with a minimum depth of 6m. The starboard reef is marked by a stick and the port is obvious in good light. Entry point = 03o 09.06S / 152o 33.54E

Anchor opposite resort in 10 m sand (open to NW) OR go past jetty & Mark's yacht to anchor in duck pond with good all round protection.

Free WIFI. Mark is planning on installing channel markers and leads in the future.

Contact mark.bassani301060@gmail.com +675 72831272

**Forza – May 2010:** We went to the west side and anchored off Lakakot Resort in Lagagot Bay in 10m of water in pos'n 03 09.04 152 33.66 this was directly off the small resort. Keep the sounder going on your way in as there are both nth & sth reefs you have to negotiate at the entrance, we had least depth of about 5m going in the entrance.

The resort mainly caters for gold mine personnel from the other side of the island. Here you can get fresh baked bread, there is a bar if you decide to ask them for an evening meal. We had one meal there for 45k per head and were quite disappointed although we were the only people there which might have had something to do with it. A truck leaves for the mine every morning at around 5 and the manager, Joseph, arranged for it to take and fill 3 jerry cans with fuel, the price was 4k per ltr and delivered to the beach that night. Things may be different if the management changes. Also, we next went to the east side and could have got the fuel ourselves but it was the same price. Again lots of canoes here but nothing to trade.

Londolovit Bay, east side of Lahir Island. We went around the north end of the island and anchored in 6m of water in pos'n 03 04.51 152 38.02 which is just off the jetty. This is a mining

town with a service station close to the jetty and there is a supermarket and hardware shop plus various other shops and also a market. We tried to arrange a tour of the mine but it all got too hard due to safety regulations etc. It is a huge operation and almost everybody in the town is employed by the mining company. We got a call on 16 by an expat who lives on the hill looking down on the anchorage, who invited us for a BBQ on the Friday, as it was only Wednesday we had to politely decline as we planned to leave the next day. There is little to recommend this place unless you need fuel or stores and all prices are expensive, the anchorage is also open to the east.

**Amante:** Lihir is famous as the site of a large gold mine. We arrived on the west side and proceeded to look for a suitable anchorage. Unfortunately, the west side was very "steep to", i.e. it was either knee deep or 100m. The water looked great for diving but the boat needed a safe harbor.

We discovered the main Harbor of Queen Luisa was taken over by the gold mine. The steam from natural geothermal energy is used to power the mine operations.

There is a large expat community present that live in an area resembling a military base. We met a nice group of Australians there. They took us to their stores which abounded in exotica such as cheese and Oreos.

### **3.12.7 Tanga Islands (Boang, Melandok, Lif) (03-25S / 153-14E)**

**Field Trip – August 2017 – Boang:** 03 22.586 S / 153 14.844 E This was a very nice village. We really enjoyed the village and the chief. It is basically the chief's family that lives on this side and they were extremely nice. They had a meal for us ashore, and we walked with them to the market one day.

We had a great day, hiking to the market in the morning and diving in the afternoon. The market was 5km each way, and a very unique experience. Rarely does the village on the other side of the island get white visitors, and we were a spectacle for everyone. There was a large crowd that followed us around as we looked for items to purchase. The market itself was average as best, consisting mainly of beetle nut, but we did find some pineapple, capsicum and bananas. The dive was excellent, and the water clarity pristine. We plan on doing another dive today.

Dive Site: 03 22.465 S / 153 14.837 E The dives here were nice. We did about 6 dives on this site in various areas all along the shallow and then deeper wall farther to the NW. The water clarity was outstanding.

**Screensaver – July 2017 - Malendok, Bitlik:** 03 30.25 S / 153 12.40 E in 18m, rock coral, no cell. I had a couple of nice anchorages picked out but as is the case with many of these islands out here and the surrounding waters are pretty much uncharted so on arrival at our anchor point at around 17:00 I found it to be 70m deep, or 1m.

Another spot on North end of Lif was only 25 minutes away and looked to be better protected and not all that deep. But this too wasn't going to work unless you were going to drop your anchor on the underwater cliff and pull back on stern line to shore, keeping your fingers and toes crossed.

We had a waypoint from SE Asia Cruising Guide but I don't know why anyone even bothered to give a waypoint to DD.mm only, it's a complete waste of time and misleading when such accuracies cover 1 nm (ie 60 seconds is a NM).

We crept through the channel and once again my depth sounder screams at me not enough water. More and more now if it goes from greater than 90m to less than 9m in a second I have tended to ignore it. So with the wind up, the light disappearing rapidly, the depth alarm screaming at me we made it through the channel to approach Bitlik.

Creeping around in near dark with no decent Google image, in uncharted water, with the depth going from 40 to 20 to 5m, the depth alarm going went off I decided we either had to stop and live with what we had now or move on. With the anchor down I hoped the wind would not change in the night as I had no real idea how far away we were from the Island's reef where we were. My anchor watch that night was set very tight and thankfully the night passed without any drama.

The next morning a trip to Bitlik and climb up the hill for the view revealed we were too close to the reef. The view was however very nice and it did look the part.

**Screensaver – July 2017 – Lif Island:** We ended up moving behind a small reef where at least we had enough swing room and were in 9m and not 20m. 03 30.67 S / 153 11.37 E

**Adina - July 2015 – Lif Island:** 03 30.68 S / 153 11.37 E 22m Sand, OK holding. Ashore: Village Cell: No Anchorage protection provided by horseshoe reef. Not easy to get ashore at village due to the reef running along the island but locals will paddle out and show you the gap. Access also by school near the anchorage and you can then walk to village. The Chief wasn't as proactive as at other villages we visited but overall friendly. Trading.

**Endless Summer - 2011** Between Lif and Bitlik, there's an extension of coral that you can pull behind. Anchor in 45-65'. ES was in 85 (3 boats filled space).

**Forza – May 2010 – Lif Island:** After passing between the islands We dropped anchor on the east side of Lif island in 17m of water in pos'n 03 30.67 153 11.34. This anchorage is inside a reef and quite sheltered from the swell, the reef is also quite good to snorkel. We traded for fruit and veggies and also batteries (4) for crayfish, it is usual that they ask for batteries and then spear the crays overnight with torches and bring the crays the next morning. A nice anchorage.

### **3.12.8 Namatanai / PunPun (03-30S / 152-27E)**

**Screensaver – July 2017:** Anchorage 03 39.45 S / 152 26.87 E Pun Pun in 8m, 2G cell.

Namagurtamat or Rahang Bay has a small harbour. At the end of the day with the large cargo boat there it seemed too small for us all to play in the same area so we stopped just around the corner off Pun Pun. A trip to the small town in the tender searching for a post office was a lost cause and reinforced my growing belief to keep away from the mainland as I was approached by man telling us it's not safe here to anchor I will show you were to go, where are you now, how long will you stay, is it just you two.... all leading questions and if he was genuine then that too is a reason not to be here.



### **3.12.9 Feni Islands (04-02S / 153-37E)**

**Screensaver – July 2017 – Ambitle Island N:** 04 01.5167 S / 153 37.1667 E Anchor in 20m, mud/sand 2G. The anchorage is behind a reef so no sea action but bit squishy and when the 30 odd knot squalls came through, usually between 1:00am and 4:00am. The next day promised more rain and squalls so we took lay day here and we hid from the rain and squalls.

**Adina – July 2015 – Ambitle Island N:** Anchorage position 04 01.443 S / 153 37.372 E 15m sand good holding. Tight anchorage, didn't stay as shelter wasn't great for our visit.

**Unknown Boat – Feb 2014:** 04-01.51S 153-37.11E (St Johns Harbour). Anchor in channel (10m sand) between Feni Is and the small islet. (approach is from the east through the reef). This is a must stop!! The people here are extremely friendly and really welcome yachts. They will give the biggest and best of their fruit and veggies, crayfish, fish etc. There are two chiefs in this village and one chief (with whom we spent a lot of time) is Benjamin and wife Mary. Lovely people and beautiful calm anchorage. Great walks on the island.

**Endless Summer:- 2011:** Endless Summer's favorite place. Logging hasn't been allowed so the jungle is beautiful. Very friendly. Ambitle has a great rip in the seafloor offshore that bubbled up hotwater - hot bath! and very kind people.

**Forza – May 2011 – Ambitle Island North:** We went to the anchorage suggested in the guide, entering the reef to the north of St Johns island and turned south to anchor in position 04 01.52 153 37.22 in 23m of water. A local elder called Clement made us welcome and showed us the village and his various gardens, well worth the visit. Also, after collecting 4 batteries from each boat he delivered at 6.15 the next morning 7 crayfish each. Boy, did we have a feast that night. As a lot of the crays are quite small, we just took the tails and gave him back the heads as they make soup out of them. This is a nice sheltered anchorage but needs eyeballs and sounder when coming in.

**Forza – May 2011 – Ambitle Island West:** After 2 days at the north anchorage, we headed south to Nanum Bay where there are hot springs. This is an easy entry and we anchored in 20m in pos'n 04 06.41 153 35.39.

Ashore we met a lady called Macy who went to school in Brisbane and spoke with an Aussie accent. Macy took us up the hill to a stream which was hot and we also visited a few houses. The walk was good and it was interesting to talk about the present situation regarding gold mining.

There is gold on the island but one faction wants to bring in the big companies, while another group wants to be more environmental and just pan it themselves – who knows who will eventually win!! We were made very welcome but Macy was just visiting and so the village elder called John will probably be the man to talk to. Also, I am sure we were not taken to the source of the hot springs which apparently is worth seeing.

**Westward II – Feb 2011:** We spent 3 nights in a roly anchorage on the east side of Ambitle Island (04 02.0040 S / 153 38.9250 E) and then moved a little NE to the west side of Babase Island. It was still a little roly. (04 01.477 S / 153 39.2910 E)

### **3.12.10      *Green Island Group / Nissan Island (04-28S / 154-12E)***

**Unknown Source:** Nissan Island (half way between Bougainville and New Ireland) makes an excellent stopping point on a passage from Buka to Rabaul. The locals are very friendly and keen to trade and a yacht club with secure anchorage is in the process of being established here.

Docking

Southern passage approach waypoint: 04-30.288S / 154-09.844E.

From there head directly to 04-30.190S, 154-10.258E.

Turn to starboard and you can anchor in front of the sandy beach and village or Yotchibol.

The anchorage provides good shelter from both the SE trade winds and the NW monsoon winds. There is a good sandy bottom that holds the anchor well, although in some places the bottom is patchy so it pays to find a sandy spot and snorkel on your anchor to check it has dug in.

The people here are extremely friendly and you will likely be surrounded by canoes from the village on arrival. The villagers are always keen to trade garden foods such as greens, fruits, green coconuts and yams or sweet potatoes for rice, noodles or biscuits.

The Chief's name is Patrick, he won't come out to your boat so it is polite to go into the village to introduce yourself and sign his guest book. In years past up to 20 yachts a year have visited this Island, however few visit now.

Nearby you will find the new Nissan Island Yacht Club (NIYC). This is where Australian Andrew Kilvert and his Papua New Guinean wife Imelda Tokiapron live. You may see Andrew's yacht anchored outside his property on the shore.

By far the most important service the NIYC offers is a secure mooring at the front of Yotchibol village. No visiting vessels will be bothered by opportunists trying to trick people into paying non-existent anchorage fees (as occurs in other places). The local villagers keep a careful watch over any boats in the anchorage to make sure that no-one from another part of the island is straying too close.

The NIYC can also provide introductions to other atolls for those who are planning on spending time exploring the region and cultural tips on how to get by safely.

There is a mission station on the far side of the lagoon where there is a store for basic supplies.

Snorkelling along the drop-off is reported to be excellent with some big fish and lots of sharks.

Green Islands are part of Bougainville and the locals sometimes travel to Buka, a 2 hour journey via open boat with outboard. The island has a Digicel tower..

Nissan Island Yacht Club & Guest House

Tel:0792368422

akilvert@yahoo.com

**Screensaver – July 2017 - Nissan Island:** We went through the southern pass on the west side of the lagoon and anchored in several spots in the southern end of the Nissan lagoon.

**Adina – July 2015 – Nissan Island:** Anchorage position 04-30.980 S / 154-10.678 E 9m in sand and coral with good holding. No cell coverage.

The Navionics charts are out about 2nm. Entry to the lagoon is located at 04-30.269 S / 154-09.912 E. The entrance is a little tricky, satellite images are not great so have a good look out. Strong currents do occur.

Very friendly village near the pass, go ashore to visit the Chief / Warden whose name is Patrick. Lots of people wanting to trade and they will paddle to your boat.

Andrew an Australian who has married a local girl may be there on his yacht and his house is near his yacht (akilvert@yahoo.com, 079368422). Helpful and welcoming, he has plans to set up a Nissan Island Yacht Club. There are other villages in this big lagoon, move according to wind direction.

**Sophia – November 2013 – Nissan Island:** We arrived at Nissan Atoll (also called Green Island) at 8am in the morning and went through the pass without any problems, it was quite obvious where the passage was and the water was super clear and beautiful. It's our first atoll on this trip, so that was quite exciting. It's quite different from the Maldivian atolls that are the only ones I know, as there isn't much beach and some of the island is quite raised. It's very densely wooded, as well as fairly densely populated. We read that 3000 people live here, but the local chief said 1700. We're anchored just inside the passage to the south in 3-4 meters of water, but with quite poor holding in coral and hard sand.

We had barely gotten our anchor down before the first dugouts arrived. One funny thing is the canoes now again have outriggers here in PNG, same as in Vanuatu, but different from the single hulls in Solomon Islands! The locals were very keen to trade with us, and we got yummy passionfruit, a local orange/mandarin fruit, paw paws, pineapple, eggs, bananas, starfruit, kumera, eggplant and lots more I can't remember. So despite the soil being fairly poor and sandy with lots of coral rock, it still is quite fertile! Sugar was especially popular to trade, but we also traded second hand clothes, fish hooks, line, pencils, lollies and salt. The only income possibility they have is copra and cocoa, but at the moment they aren't selling any, because the price is only 20% of normal prices. It's a 2-3 hour trip to Buka for them with their fast outboards, but it's very expensive in fuel, and hardly justify the cost of selling their produce at the market there.

Later when we visited the village and met the chief we learned we're only the 4th yacht this year. Some years they have had many more though, when the visitor book started in 2002 maybe 30 boats visited! There are a ton of kids and young people in the village and everyone are super friendly. It does get a bit tiring being constantly surrounded by canoes all day long (starting at 6.30 in the morning!), but on the other hand, it's also quite understandable, as we're the biggest and best entertainment they have had in a long time. Plus of course the trading possibility. After the first day we had to stop trading though, as we already had more fruit and veggies than we can eat!

Today we spent most of the day ashore being guided around by 16 year old boys. They took us to the school which is about 30 minute walk away. It was Saturday, so no teaching, but it was still very interesting to see anyway and we spent a while looking at maps, books and stories written by the kids that hang on the wall. Some younger boys that were also following us

climbed up really high in a tree to fetch us a local fruit that looks a bit like a green mango, but is more like an apple in texture and taste.

The next day we went for a snorkel in the entrance to the atoll. The entrance itself wasn't very interesting, but right outside on the very edge, the reef drops from maybe 7 meters to really deep (deeper than our dept sounder) and on that edge we saw several sharks, some of fairly decent size and they were pretty curious. At this point we were back in the dinghy, because the out-going tide kept sweeping us out to sea, so we were doing the head-snorkeling thing from the dinghy. Suddenly we also realised we were surrounded by a big pod of dolphins. It was hard to pick whether look over the water and see them do full body jumps/spins out of the water, or look underwater where we could also spot them swim underneath the dinghy. Pretty amazing.

**Forza – May 2010 – Pinipel Island:** We went to this island as we hoped it would be less populated than Nissan Island, however our anchorage was quite a long way offshore, due to an inshore reef, so we only stayed one night.

In hindsight it would have been better to anchor just to the east of Sau Island. The entrance is a little tricky and again sounder and eyeballs are very necessary. On arrival go to a position 04 21.94 154 06.28 and then steer approx 150 which takes you close to the headland of Pinipel Is and also reasonably close to Sentinel Is.

This means you clear a large reef in the middle of the bay. After getting down to Sau Is we turned to port and anchored in 25m of water in pos'n 04 22.67 154 07.12 This is a nice sheltered bay and Sau Island looks well worth exploring.

### ***3.13 New Ireland & Close Islands – West Side***

#### ***3.13.1 Lamassa Island (04-41S / 152-46E)***

**Westward II – November 2011:** 04 41.479 S / 152 46.154 E) Deep, rough bottom

#### ***3.13.2 Cape Waum (04-43S / 152-48E)***

**Soggy Paws – August 2019 – North Side of Cape Waum:** 04-43.56 S 152-48.055 E Bottom shallows slowly from 40 ft to about 12 ft if you go way in. The east side of the head of the cove gets very shallow, the west side is deeper. We anchored in 25 ft and spent 3 rainy blustery days there, well sheltered. We had one other boat there with us and there was plenty of room for another boat or two.

We had a number of canoes visit us in the cove from nearby Ningin Island and Lamassa Island. They have gardens ashore in the cove, and if you needed veggies, you could probably buy or trade for some.

There is a fresh water river that comes out in the cove. We could hear what sounded like a waterfall, but it seemed to just be rapids.

We also saw a large crocodile in the cove as we entered it, he seemed not afraid of us at all.

**Soggy Paws – March 2019:** Rod Pearce told us of a couple of anchorages around Cape Waum. Our cruising buddies had chosen to go to English Cove, so we didn't anchor here, but we did go in far enough to check it out. The wind was blowing pretty briskly out of the NNW, but as we approached the Cape, it suddenly switched to southerly (some weird land effect). So

the north side of Cape Waum, which had looked to us to be exposed to the wind, became quite sheltered. (and little Ningin Island, just north of the Cape, and its surrounding reefs, added more shelter).

We went in as far as 04-43.557 S / 152-48.070 E and found a flat area that looked like sand at about 30 ft deep. It was calm and nice in there.

Rod says there is a Japanese Plane (a Val) crashed up on the ridge. If you anchor in this spot, go ashore at the head of the bay and find a path leading up to the ridge, you might be able to find it. Rod put his finger at about 04-43.8 S / 152-48.1 E, but he didn't have an exact waypoint for it.

There are coves on both sides of Cape Waum that look anchorable. We did not notice any villages (or canoes fishing) in this area.

### **3.13.3 Irish Cove & English Cove (04-46S / 152-51E)**

**Soggy Paws – March 2019 – English Cove:** 04-46.28 S / 152-51.42 E We actually fit 4 40 ft cruising boats (3 cats and a mono) into this bay. We were last in, so had the outer spot. Though the offshore winds were blowing out of the NNW, we had winds here blowing directly into the bay, but not strong (except for one 30 knot squall). It was pretty calm because the outer reefs block the swell.

We dropped our anchor in about 40-45 ft and backed toward the head of the bay, hanging in about 30 ft.

We were immediately swarmed by friendly people in canoes (I suggest you be "secured" and ready before anchoring). Most of the people live on Lambom / Lumbom Island to the south, but come to English Cove to get fresh water (usually in the afternoon). As the sun set, almost everyone paddled off back to the village on Lumbom, except Passie (pronounced like the American word posse), the head of one of 3 families that live in English Cove. He spoke good English and we enjoyed talking with him. Another guy who lived in the bay was Joel, who also spoke good English, and didn't chew beetlenut or drink alcohol. Both Passie and Joel invited us ashore to swim in the fresh water stream. They also assured us that there were no crocs in the cove.

We eventually organized with Passie a walk up the stream to a small waterfall. (wear strong shoes!), and we had a swim in the clear blue swimming hole.

On Saturday, the kids were out of school and swarmed us in the morning in their canoes, with things to trade—coconuts, bananas, fruit, and eggplant. Be vigilant as at least one of them was quite light-fingered. We lost a pair of shoes that were in the dinghy (raised up on davits, but obviously not high enough), and maybe a knife from a dish drainer next to an open porthole.

Other than the missing shoes, we had a nice time in this anchorage, but better to visit on weekdays.

We did go into Irish Cove and as we had been told, found it quite deep. There is room for at least one boat to drop anchor in reasonable depths, but fitting 4 of us into Irish Cove would have been tough. It was more protected from the winds we had than English Cove. We talked to Ivan who lives in Irish Cove. He told us they have a stream and a waterfall you can walk to in Irish Cove as well.

**2XS – August 2016 – Irish Cove:** Approx Posn: 04 46.43 S / 152 51.21 E It took us most of the day to get to Irish Cove, recommended by John Lau, who we met in the bar at Rapopo Plantation resort.

Irish Cove was absolutely beautiful. Mysterious, steep, thickly forested, with drifting mist down the valleys.

We stayed there for two nights. Sunday we had decided to relax, and get the kayaks out to explore the rivers, and English Cove around the corner. Well, we ended up doing boat projects instead and the kayaks stayed where they live, down in the hold.

I spent the afternoon entertaining visitors. A whole flotilla of little canoes showed up, with 12 children ranging in age from 7-14. They were on their way back to their village after church. Coming to see us involved a detour of many kilometres but they were perfectly happy to paddle in their tiny boats. I gave them a few biscuits and a friendship bracelet and read them some stories, then sent them on their way.

The older girls spoke English quite well and I was able to ask them if there were crocodiles in the bay. Oh yes! They said, cheerily. Many many crocodiles in the mangroves – the mangroves were about 20 metres away... So...no swimming for me! I did dip quickly into the water, hanging onto the ladder for a brief moment because I was so SO hot, after the children had gone. It was surprisingly cold – I am used to the water being very warm and balmy! But it didn't matter...I wasn't staying in more than a few seconds, not with many MANY crocs nearby!

**Westward II – November 2011 – English Cove:** 04-46.288 S / 152 51.408 E Sheltered, fresh stream

### **3.14 New Hanover Island**

#### **3.14.1 Baungnung (W Coast)**

**Screensaver – June 2017:** Anchor in 6m, sand, Cell 2G.

We tried to stop at Nauna Island, but couldn't find a spot, so we carried on, another 120nm E to Baungnung on the SW coast of New Hanover.

The trip across was pretty uneventful, and the moon hung around for a bit as we motored probably 70% of the way with sails pretty much hanging there like laundry. We only really managed to get some wind from the South towards the end.

As we crept into anchor at Baungnung a guy in canoe came out to welcome us. In the centre of the bay is a 30m hole, and our first anchor attempt we must have dropped it on the edge, so keep south. It is nice to meet local people in their canoes and chat, especially when there is no language barrier, but after 27 odd hours I wasn't all that keen.

But they were all very nice generally helpful and weren't looking for something for nothing. These things are a two way street and I guess in some respects I had a bit of an epiphany. We had asked about real potatoes, rather than sweet potatoes, and a couple of other not so readily available vegetables and were told they don't have any here. Which we didn't think unusual because potatoes are rare and expensive.

We later discovered they really did have them, but not many and Kim's comment (to me) was they are liars..... Well, that may be true but we are no better, how many times have you said we have no smokes, or beer when asked. I personally tend to try and say we don't have enough sorry, and offer something else.

Once again land ownership was stated early on in the conversation, but no one has asked for money as yet. Many of the older blogs and cruising guides for the Pacific and here will talk about asking for permission to anchor and to go onto the beach. This never seemed expected when I did Solomon's, Vanuatu, New Caledonia and perhaps the tourist side or number of yachts has changed this. But here, now I'm generally asking if its ok when someone comes or says they are a land owner. What will happen when/if they ask for money will be interesting as one owner in Manus already warned us that if someone approaches us, looking for money saying they are the land owner, you give them my name and tell them "no, I am the owner and said you can stay for free".

The anchorage was still getting some SE swell making the night a little roly, and hence we left in the morning heading for Kavieng.

### **3.14.2 Dunung (Tunung) Island (NW Coast)**

**Field Trip – Sep 2017:** 02 22.249 S / 150 07.268 E Great place with nice man Clemens who runs Clem's place and his brother junior. 8k per dive on wreck. The wreck dive here is HUGE. You will need to probably have Clem or someone show you where the dive is as it can be hard to find. Regardless, it's a very good dive even if visibility is a little poor at times.

Dive Site (maybe): 02 22.229 S / 150 07.846 E This is a huge wreck, and very interesting. It will take 2-3 dives to see everything, and the mini-sub is reall nice as well. To find the sub, look for the cable running from the end of the mast going about NW. The cable is there to help divers find the sub as it is about 50-70m from the wreck but impossible to see.

**Totem – 2013:** Anchored at 02 22.3180 S / 150 07.2790 E Tunung Island in 25' sand.

Tunung (erroneously labeled "Dunung" on our charts) has a large WWII ship and the wreck of a submarine to find, and a great position to jump off for the ~320 nm trip to the Hermits- so off we go.

Working between New Hanover and the fringing islands, we see one sweet spot after another. Islets that look to too perfect to be real pass in our wake: white sand, palm trees, pods of dolphins. Beautiful swells curl great stretches into sandy shores; I suspect we are passing world class, barely touched surfing spots. Not to mention, the waves look less lethal than most of the dumps into the coral reefs we've seen. But it's not all rosy behind the lush scenery, since we've been warned about theft and danger around the logging camps along the larger island, and want to pick our anchorage with care.

With the anchor down at the Three Islands Harbour island of Tunung, we dinghy in loops around the area where we believe the wrecks to be located. If there was ever a time I really wanted a fish finder or depth sounder in our dink, this would be it! We know we're in the right place, but the ship eludes us. It doesn't help that we've started out with poor light in the back half of the afternoon, with high tide, and poor viz in the water. Just as we've pointed back towards Totem, a dugout is launched and begins paddling towards us. We motor over for hellos and meet Paul. He knows exactly where the wreck is, and takes us to the spot.

It's magical, and somber. A large ship lying on one side, a few meters below the surface. Knowing we're over the sunken tomb of the crew feels heavy. The sides are surprisingly clean, but the biggest coral fans I've ever seen wave gently in the current. A school of large sweetlips hide inside, in the shadows of the hull. We drift silently with the current, awed on different fronts by the beauty of the marine life the knowledge of the real people who died beneath us. Back in the dinghy, we marvel over the size of the fish. I joke with Jamie about going back to catch dinner, but it doesn't feel right.

Only a handful of families live on Tunung. Many work at the small resort on shore, but it's closed temporarily. Most of the island's children seem to be on Totem at one point in the afternoon, and they're the quietest bunch we've met. We invite them aboard and sit in the cockpit, drinking cold juice and snacking on watermelon together. Old enough to attend school, we know they can understand some English, but they don't speak much- mostly just reacting to questions with quiet giggles and wide eyes. The junior crew on Totem is swimming around the boat, jumping off and climbing back up again like a big floating jungle gym, but they aren't able to lure the other kids into their fun.

School is across on the "mainland", as they refer to the island of New Hanover (only 20 miles across, but the main island from their perspective). Children paddle their dugouts daily to attend school- older children helping to ferry the youngest. There are no helicopter parents here! I look at the stretch of water, and marvel that they even make it on a regular basis. But then I think of the kids back on Panapompom, who have a long barefoot walk over a coral path (trust me, this hurts even if you have toughened feet) and then get to cross a river with crocs so that they can have the privilege of schooling. The boy paddling ahead of us has a cracker tin which probably keeps his notebook dry, and parcel woven from coconut fronds that probably holds lunch.

We were grateful for Paul's help finding the shipwreck in Three Island Harbour and enjoyed his company, so invited he and his family out in the evening.

Paul paddled out to Totem after sunset; sitting in the evening breeze and eating dinner together, we talk about his home. He grew up on the adjacent island, attending school until he was a teenager and his father told him to fail the test to pass to the next grade. He was needed at home to help with the family's fishing. Piloting the boat for years evolved to work at the small resort on Tunung, helping drive tourists around to dive or surf sites. It's closed temporarily, but it's given him a good living: the owner helps support his employees with not just cash but goods and materials they can't easily access otherwise, such as lumber and nails for their homes.

Like a lot of people we've met in PNG, Paul is smart and frustrated. Tourism gives him the exposure to how much he's missing, and the near impossibility for people to get ahead. He wants to save for his children's future, but can't use a bank – there isn't one that's practically accessible (the only transportation, private boat, translates to a fuel cost that's too high for a casual visit- probably a month's earnings- and fees charged for small accounts only deplete meager savings). He sees the ripple effect of logging on adjacent New Hanover. Elders sign away rights to their people's land for grossly undervalued payment and without understanding the consequences of clear cutting. We hear that often, the land is appropriated without consent- that the power of money shifted to the right hands overcomes obstacles, and put signatures on documents from people who may not even be alive. Workers brought in from outside the local social structure introduce alcohol and violence to communities that can't sanction them through traditional means, and don't have the public services to handle the fallout. Fish are getting



harder to find, as massive ships take everything from the waters when they pass through, making subsistence living that much more difficult. The wealth being extracted is massive, yet he has no opportunity to participate, and none of it goes to basic public services or improvements. For all the money being earned by a precious few, there is still not a road to connect the coastline of New Hanover, the schools are under-served, there is no public transportation or regular boat services connecting communities, and meager health “clinics” sprinkled through islands are under equipped and staffed.

Paul has every right to be extremely angry. To be sure, he’s frustrated: with the foreign companies that take blindly, with the government that chooses to be bought instead of supporting the people they are supposed to represent. But he’s not an angry person. He doesn’t accept it, but he doesn’t know what to do. How can people organize, when they don’t have communication or transportation, much less running water, electricity, or other basic public services?

**Westward II – 2011:** Anchored at 02 22.2860 S / 150 07.3030 E Comment was, “visit Clem’s place”.

**Amante:** We were first met by a nice guy, named Lazarus. He turned out to be the local policeman. He proudly stands in front of a newly carved dugout canoe. He said they take 2-3 weeks to finish. We can attest that they weigh a ton. As we said, they are the best dugouts we’ve seen in the Pacific.

Dunung has a popular dive site, which is a Japanese ship which apparently was carrying a mini-sub when sunk. The ship is a mess but the sub is intact.

"Junior", a nice guy, showed us where the ship & sub were located.

We also met Junior’s dad Anton. Just as we were about to leave, he showed his island hospitality by bringing us two large lovely lobsters for a very nominal fee. This very pleasant elderly gentleman is still canoeing and his only complaint was a aching left shoulder. We were able to supply him with some relief.

### **3.14.3 Ungalik (N Coast)**

**Free Bird – Feb 2015:** Ungalik is at approx 02\*22.6/150\*15.5.

Ungalik is densely populated and many people have gardens on New Hanover Is. They go back and forth daily in a variety of craft and are always ready to trade fresh produce. A trip up the river is worthwhile as well. Useful contacts on Ungalik were Patrick and Lawrence. We spent quite a few days here.

**Totem – November 2012:** We’re at Ungalik now, a little island near the top of New Hanover. On our own again, we were ushered in by a stream of dugouts as children came back from the “mainland” from school. We joke about how there is often a welcoming committee, and this time it’s Lawrence. Giving him a fish we caught on our way in, he led us into a good anchoring spot. Later we were given a tour around the island, with an entourage of children that grew to something over 70 (who could count?). In the evening, a surprise boatside delivery of a mumu dinner of yams, cassava and smoked fish (looking a lot like the fish we’d brought in earlier!).

We really need to get west. I’d like to have time to spend at Ninigo, and we know we’re on the wrong side of the season now. But it’s OK: we’ll get there. And while Ungalik was intended as a

brief stopover, I can see our visit stretching through the soccer games tomorrow, and can imagine the hymns at church on Sunday...

#### **3.14.4 Between Tsoilok and Dunung (NE Coast)**

**Amante:** After idyllic Tsoilok we left for Three Island Harbor, which has a well-known dive site. Our first anchorage was very sheltered, which can mean easy access for locals to visit. The village nearby was brimming with kids, most just out of school.

Unfortunately, not all the kids in the village were nice. A couple started demanding things, then began jeering when we said "no", mostly to requests for stuff like cigarettes, which we don't carry.

With sunset approaching and a dozen potentially hostile canoes milling around, we decided to find shelter elsewhere. This is about the first time we left an anchorage because the natives made us feel unsafe.

After spending a rough night in the bay next door we decided to check out our intended destination, Dunung Island.

#### **3.14.5 Mossuang (NE Coast)**

**Screensaver – June 2017:** 02 26.250 S / 150 21.217 E Anchor in 12m sand 2G.

The locals came out to greet us and of course the land owner statement was in the first 5 min of conversation. First the son and then later Dad came to say hi on his way home from church, so we figured it was probably safe enough here.

#### **3.14.6 Tsoilik (East Coast Islands)**

**Screensaver – June 2017:** 02 25.317 S / 150 24.55 E Anchor in 5m, sand 2g Cell.

The guy here we met has seen a few hard times, lost his daughter, first wife, but is now into everything to help the community and a little art painting along the way.

But what he has inspired and is going on here with no help from the government, and money for materials come from him and local people is really quite nice.

They are building a new church, a town meeting hall, kitchen, tables chairs, water collection. He sells some of his paintings, hauls timber which they buy about 3nm on the canoe paddling to do all this.

Some thought and redesign to His and Hers toilet which is a more enhanced version of the normal bit in the ground with some rocks, PVC piping and a strategic pit depth in conjunction with the tide water level was a new twist.

**Westward II – January 2011:** Anchored at 02 26.23 S / 150 25.56 E

**Amante:** We moved up the E coast of New Hanover inside a lagoon and anchored off the charming island of Tsoilik. Here we're greeted by two locals, Timothy and Ian. Like most Melanesian youth they were very polite and well-spoken. Schools appear to be a high priority in PNG and it shows.

A nice local guy named Cruz gave us a tour of the eco-resort his father Graham was building. The bungalow behind him is typical PNG: on stilts with woven walls and thatch roof. They are excellent builders with local materials.

### **3.14.7 Tsoilanung (East Coast Islands)**

**Screensaver – June 2017:** 02 32.467 S / 150 30.58 E. Anchored in 4m, sand 2G.

The trip up from Kavieng was a little nervy as depth of water is all over place and can go from 20 odd meters to 5 or 6 quickly with very little sign of change, and we had been following the shipping route.... well I thought we were anyway.

I anchored as close in as I could to get out of the main stream but it didn't help. Another long banana boat came buy not long after dark, Friday night and they also had a few tooooooo many. Probably 8-10 in the boat going home would be my guess. They wanted to come aboard but weren't as pushy/pissed as our previous encounter, and I guess a couple of the other passengers were quite sober.

Given that I was hardly dressed at all when I stood up from cockpit, that was probably enough to scare anyone away and in the end after asking for smokes, beers, mixers for their whisky, they departed. This of course did nothing to help Kim's confidence so I stayed up till around 01:30 2:00am setup my usual traps and went to bed.

### **3.14.8 Kulibang (E Coast Islands)**

**Screensaver – June 2017:** 02 26.43 S / 150 26.32 E in 6m sand 2g Cell Service.

Most of the inner islands are quite shallow, so you end up anchoring a fair way off the beach. While it might look like the beach is very nice, more often than not thick seaweed resides in the first metre, and one needs to get a long way off the beach to go for a swim.

A couple of local guys probably in their mid to late 20's came by asking for some yeast and or sugar. We were told they were going to have a bit of party in school for the villages, and they were doing some baking etc. All sound pretty ok to me so we gave them some yeast, but we were low on sugar. So we asked when and where, with the intention to go over later and crash the party. A couple of hours later we went over to Watusi and lasked Ken if they came for sugar and he said yep.... you know what they are doing of course—making homebrew alcohol!

Anyway we went in there, saw the head teacher and some other locals as this "Party" was to be held in the school grounds etc, and sure enough, not one soul knew of anything, and nothing was going on at the school..... Ok they got me this time.

### **3.14.9 Analeua Island (E Coast Islands)**

Jake Airplane wreck reported here at 02 35.222 S / 150 29.107 E (source unknown)

**Totem – October 2012:** We anchored here in 48 ft sand, sheltered from the NW. There is a vocational school ashore.

### 3.14.10 *Magam (S Coast)*

**Miss Behave – August 2014:** Last night we stayed at a great little bay at: 02 39.741S 150 23.220E. Best to enter on a heading of 300Mag. 7metres in mud with good holding. The village name is MAGAM. We were the first boat to visit them in their memory. The village chief is Silau AMOS. We met the Court Clerk, Jeremiah SAKIAS and one of the two school teachers, Sarah. They speak Tungak. One good phrase is "Kalaro Luai" meaning "Thankyou very much" and "Tanebo" meaning "Good Morning".

### 3.15 *Manus Province (NW Offshore Islands)*

**Pacific Wrecks:** Manus Province includes several island groups including the Admiralty Islands, Hermit Islands, Pelelun Islands and other small islands and reefs. Borders the [Bismarck Sea](#) to the south, Pacific Ocean to the north and [New Ireland Province](#) to the east.

During January 1942, Japanese forces landed in the Admiralty Islands but did not occupy it until their landing on April 8, 1942 at Lorengau. On March 12, 1944 US Army forces landed on Manus Island and recaptured the island and developed the area into a major staging base for the remainder of the war.

<a href="#">Manus Island</a>	Largest island in the Admiralties Group
<a href="#">Lorengau</a>	Village located on the northeast coast of Manus Island
<a href="#">Rossum (Rossun)</a>	Village located near the northeast coast of Manus Island
<a href="#">Los Negros Island</a>	Small island east of Manus Momote and Mokerang
<a href="#">Lombrum</a>	Located on Los Negros Island (Manus, just east of Lorengau)
<a href="#">Seeadler Harbor</a>	Manus Island Harbor, and explosion of USS Mt. Hood
<a href="#">Ndrilo</a>	Unoccupied Island attacked by 12th Calvary
<a href="#">Koruniat</a>	Unoccupied Island attacked by 12th Calvary
<a href="#">Rambutyo</a>	Small Japanese garrison attacked by 12th Calvary
<a href="#">Pak</a>	Small Japanese garrison attacked by 12th Calvary
<a href="#">Pityilu</a>	Island with USN support airstrip
<a href="#">Ponam</a>	Site of small USN strip

#### 3.15.1 *Lorengau (Port of Entry) & Lombrum*

**La Grotty – Nov 2019:** Phil was away, but his stand-in, Rodney, was great - together with a young army officer they organised everything. Lazurus the Customs guy was there and was lovely and signed us out at the army base without any desire to board our boat - he remembers you and was very happy about his good reputation! Chris, the army officer, and Rodney took the day off to drive us to town for banking and supplies, organised re-fuelling, and acted as self-

appointed tourist guides. They wouldn't let us buy them lunch or give them anything at all to say thank-you, they were just happy to be representing PNG's wonderful hospitality.

**Soggy Paws – Sep 2019 – Lombrum:** We followed Toucan's advice and anchored in Lombrum. It felt safe from rascals, as we were anchored right off the Navy base. But it's not very convenient.

First, arrival in Lombrum should be announced to the Lombrum Port Control officer. You can try on VHF 16, but at the time we were there, they were not monitoring VHF. The Port Control Officer's name is Phil Nadi—he was nice and helpful—his contact info is:

[philnadi@gmail.com](mailto:philnadi@gmail.com)

PH: +675 7123 4157

+675 7578 1805

Phil will arrange for Customs and Immigration to come out to the Navy base. They boarded us (the only place in PNG that did so), even though we were already checked into the country, and in fact were checking out the next day.

Customs in PNG don't seem to have a port-based email address. They are personal email addresses, and the person we had emailed (Lazarus) that we were arriving wasn't on island any more. Contacting Phil and letting him sort it out works best (according to Phil). Vincent (a retiring Customs officer) and Israel Pais (the new guy) handled our check-in/check out. Israel's email address is [paisi@customs.gov.pg](mailto:paisi@customs.gov.pg) and cell +675 7277 7165

The Navy base at Lombrum is a restricted area, and I think even Customs needs Navy permission to come on the base.

Customs has a car, which is a nice thing. Phil managed to arrange for Customs to not only take us in to Lorengau for an ATM and shopping, but also bring us back out the same day (as private cars cannot get on base, and it's a LONG walk from the front gate to the beach). By the end of the day, the Customs guy was quite tired of chauffeuring us around, but I don't think he had a lot else to do. And we bought him lunch.

We tried to get them to check us out while they were there, rather than make another trip the next day. But they insisted they needed to clear us out within 12 hours of us leaving. So the Customs guy came back at 5pm the next day and cleared us out to leave at first light in the morning (we had to beg him for that). We needed to leave at first light (vs 9am) to make sure we would arrive in the Hermits with enough time to get into a good anchorage with good light.

Lorengau is a small town with a smallish market and a small grocery store. It seems like a dying little town. Like elsewhere in PNG, the BSP ATM has a long line and typically runs out of cash at midday. You must have cash for the fuel truck at Lombrum (and also the gas station we stopped at to get dinghy gas). If you come via Kimbe, I recommend you stock up in Kimbe with fuel, cash, and dry goods.

The detention center was actually on the Navy base. It is completely shut down now—but the pens they kept the detainees are still there on the base, empty.

There are plans, we are told, for a US Navy presence on the Lombrum Navy base. No idea how this would affect access and transportation issues.

**Toucan – August 2019 - Lombrum:** If you go to Manus, you will need to check in and out with Customs. They don't answer on VHF, but they saw us coming in and drove from Lorengau to Lombrum Bay and were waiting for us there. The customs guy is Lazarus, very nice, but will want to come on board. (They called us up from the Navy patrol boat docked at the pier). He also drove back to check us out when we were ready to leave. His email is boeul@customs.gov.pg and his no is 7064 0763.

We anchored in Lombrum Bay about equidistant from the naval pier (the last one in on your right, the first big one is the army pier) and the Nutt Point village on the other side of the bay. Anchor waypoint 02 02.746S 147 22.454E.

There is a **fuel depot** (diesel only) just to the left of the navy pier - Gerard is the owner and very helpful - his no is +675 7993 3059 or email [stevengerard807@gmail.com](mailto:stevengerard807@gmail.com) . He was about to catch a plane when we arrived but organised for his foreman, Solo, to deliver fuel in the tanker to the depot. We took our jerry cans in and filled them direct from the tanker. There is a small floating wharf between the navy pier and army pier that you can tie your dinghy up too - the gate was open when we were there so you can just walk through to the fuel depot.

The only problem is they will only take cash payment. We ended up having to pay to get a taxi into Lorengau to get cash out - they organised the taxi for us, but it cost K100 for 3 hours of time (we did some shopping too while the taxi waited). It's about a 45 min drive to Lorengau, very pretty countryside. The alternative is to go across to Nutt Point village - John and Therese did this and found someone to drive them around which would be a lot cheaper. There don't seem to be any public buses.

We felt very safe at Lombrum Bay because of all the security (it's an active army base). Just be aware there are crocs around, so no swimming! And watch out for pesky mosquitos!

**Screensaver – June 2017 - Butjo Island Lorengau:** 02 02.025 S / 147 18.629 E Anchor in 5m, Mud/Sand 2G Cell Service. Lorengau is the largest town on Manus and probably for 300 to 400nm. There has been some sort of boardings here with yachties in the past that have not ended well. So the general advice was to anchor a little out of town and behind these islands which are roughly 3ks away from the town centre. Typically I prefer to anchor in town so there are in fact plenty of eyes watching the boat, or a long way from town where it is too far for kids and the like to reach us, but in the end we followed Watusi's lead.

There were three local boats there when we arrived, plus one sunk boat said to be Stainless !! All of which are probably over 55 odd feet and were either commercial or government owned. Sadly one of the ones we got to know was carrying freight and medical supplies to the outer Islands, but the government effectively stopped paying for it, and the crew who have been looking after it haven't been paid for about a year. So it sits there going down hill.

One of the local crew whom had offered to help us the next day said he wasn't feeling the best and suggested he had Malaria. So I donated a few tablets to the cause which I had on board only to find out the next day in reality it was more likely a hangover.

They were kind enough to run us across to town with a small donation to fuel and hung around while we raided the bank, checked in, and did our shopping. The cost of things here is very near Sydney prices and in some cases more and many things are not available. Even chicken which Kim bought was well below average for Asia. Even some of the Veggies are silly prices and this is not Westerner pricing, these are market prices.

Later that day we were taken to collect my diesel which was hand pumped from a nice new 200L drum to another very clean 200L drum sitting in the Banana boat we had all day. The guys then took us back to Screensaver and pumped it into our tank. (200l @ 1.45au). Although that was a good deal I have not paid more than \$1.00 au since 2014.

We were invited to a bit of cook up on board with the local guys who had been helping us out, and Ken had some crabs to share, so we all pitched in enjoy a bit of feast. A few beers and I managed to fix their Raymarine Chart plotter. Shortly after a bottle of scotch appears as a thank you, but now knowing how expensive that is here it was donated to the table for the night, they owed us nothing and had been very helpful. So in all a good night was had with exchanges of stories and talk about the upcoming elections here. It would seem that if the party they voted for is returned then their ship may well sail again.

**2XS – July 2016:** Anchorage: 02-00.455S / 147-16.592E We didn't have much time in Lorengau, just enough to go to get a SIM card and some load for my modem and Pete's phone. And we had a beer at the hotel on the waterfront, where we spoke to the very dignified manager, Albert Posungol. We asked him about the detention centre. There are about 1,000 detainees, all wearily awaiting "processing." But the good thing is that they seem to be very welcome on the island. They stroll around and go shopping and swimming on the beaches, and many of them have jobs. In fact, two of them are working at the hotel, one as a chef, one as a kitchen hand. But I am sure they will be very happy indeed when they finally have a place they can call home.

**Endless Summer – July 2011:** SeaLevel / Elena had things taken off the boats here. Most was quickly returned.

**Anui – 2011 (from Noonsite):** We were sailing East in company with Australian yachts Unicorn IX and Red Boomer II from the Hermit Islands to Kavieng (New Ireland) on Sunday 18 September 2011.

Our friends on Unicorn were concerned that they may not have enough fuel and made the decision to pull in to the regional centre of Lorengau at midday to buy fuel and then carry on. The people of Ninigo and the Hermits had advised us not to anchor overnight at Lorengau, or any of the islands to the East or South of Manus, due to concerns for our safety.

Unicorn anchored off the town, with the skipper going ashore to get cash from the ATM and find a fuel outlet. He later reported strange behaviour from the security guard at the bank, who insisted on trying to look over his shoulder whilst making the withdrawal (of 1,000 kina).

On the skipper's return to the yacht, a local boat immediately approached, with a number of men on board. The leader, claiming to be a customs official, though without uniform or identification, boarded Unicorn and said that the skipper should come with him to check in and be prepared to pay a fee (curiously of 1,000 kina!). The skipper refused to comply, stating that he wanted to buy fuel and leave. The man said that the yacht would be seized if it attempted to leave and at this point threats of robbery and slashing of the yacht's tender were made. The "official" brought more men onto the boat, saying that they would "rob it" if the skipper did not comply. The skipper offered money in order for them to leave but the man maintained his insistence on them not leaving. It is to be noted that it was a Sunday, when Customs in Lorengau are reportedly closed.

During this time, Unicorn maintained radio contact with ourselves and Red Boomer II and requested assistance. Another Australian yacht sailing east informed us that the Australian Navy often has a boat in Lorengau Naval Base and a call was put out over the radio on Channel 16 for assistance. Whilst no response came, the men on board Unicorn may have been made uneasy by the radio calls, as they eventually left the yacht, first insisting that the skipper announce on the radio that the men were departing and that he "may have over-reacted". Unicorn pulled up anchor and left quickly, pursued by a local boat for some miles.

It is strongly advised that yachts avoid the Manus area. Vessels travelling East from Jayapura in West Papua into Papua New Guinea should note that safe opportunities for refuelling are very limited until Kavieng in New Ireland, some 670 nautical miles from Jayapura. It should also be noted that we experienced significant current against us (up to 3 knots) the whole way and that the prevailing wind is East/ South East, making sailing a challenge.

Update posted 7 October 2011

An update on the situation occurring at Lorengau as described above is that upon reaching Kavieng (New Ireland) we were informed by Customs officials that a Customs officer from Lorengau, Manus had lodged a report stating that an Australian yacht by the name of Unicorn had entered the post and left again without checking in. It appeared, therefore, that the man claiming to be a Customs official actually did hold that position, making his threatening behaviour even more of a concern.

Upon hearing Unicorn's account, the Kavieng Customs office strongly requested a report of the incident, which was duly given. When we on Anui reached our next port of Kokopo (Rabaul) with Unicorn, we attended a meeting with the Customs Regional Director to discuss the incident. He responded with a letter of full apology to Unicorn, stating that the matter would be addressed with the officer in question.

This does not necessarily alter the difficulties in safely visiting Manus, but all respect must be given to PNG Customs Authority for being willing to hear the complaint and making a full apology.

### **3.15.2 Manus North Coast**

**Gillaroo – July 2010:** Then on to Manus and the Admiralty islands, north of New Guinea. Here we had such a warm welcome it was sad to leave. The local tourism officer (nick Solomon) took us for a tour of the island including all the detrius from WW2 – floating harbours, landing craft, steam rollers, plane wrecks etc, and later, out fishing – got given a big tuna and 13 lobsters.

We also met up with the ex-minister of defense for PNG who took us drinking at the local carry out (NO DRINKING ON THE PREMISES), later had us over for a family feast and presented us with a heap of gifts.

The customs would call us up most days we were there and ask if there were anything we needed !

They were really the friendliest warmest people I think I have ever met. We did get told the usual story – the people here are fine but watch out when you get to the next island as there are some dodgy characters there but that seems to be a feature of Pacific island culture.



### 3.15.2.1 Ponam

Wikipedia: The Ponam Airfield was built by the US Navy 78th Naval Construction Battalion "Seabees" between June to August 1944. As half of the work area was swamp, coral was blasted and dredged from the ocean bed and used as landfill. During the Admiralty Islands campaign, it was used as a fighter base to provide repair and overhaul facilities for carrier aircraft.

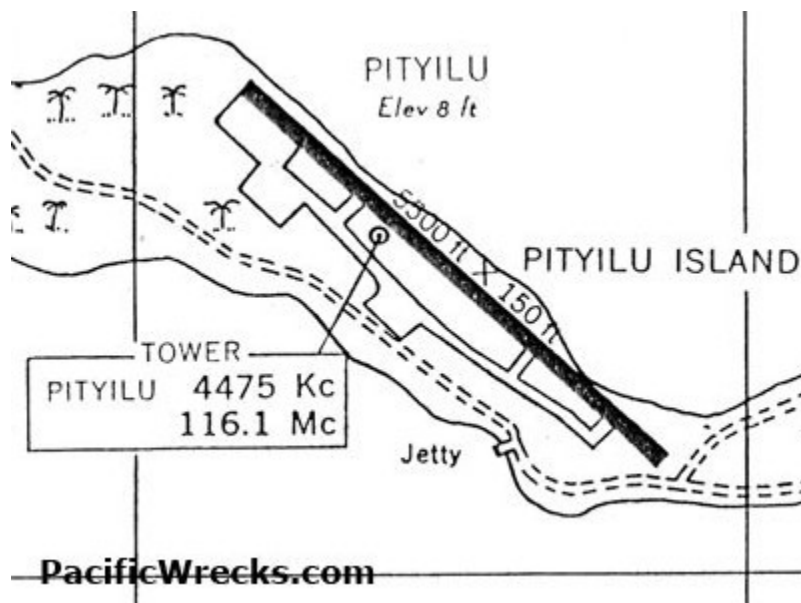
[Pacific Wrecks](#): "I served on the Fleet Air Arm on Naval Air Stations in Australia from 1944 - 1946. The task [of dumping aircraft] was huge and involved the clearance of of reserve aircraft held at Ponam and Pityilu, the two forward Royal Navy airstrips of Manus Base. The two airstrips were cleared using lighters to ships anchored offshore and the aircraft were dumped into the ocean there. This went on through March or April 1946. Not only were complete aircraft consigned to the deep, but engines and spares too."

**Screensaver – June 2017:** Anchorage 01 55.18 S / 146 53.20 E 12m, Sand, 2g Cell service.

The guys at Ponam were also very nice, very welcoming, came bearing gifts and asked for nothing in return. Again these guys have got the Tourism manual and have had the word from the government it would seem. One of the senior owners came out and spent some time chatting with us giving us his permission to stay there.

### 3.15.2.2 Pityilu Island

**Pacific Wrecks:** Used by the US Navy for a brief period while we were there to practice carrier landings in early eve and after dark. Later turned over the the Royal Navy, and along with nearby Pityilu Airstrip were their only airbases in the South West Pacific area.



**Screensaver – June 2017:** Anchorage 01 57.75 S / 147 13.05 E 13m, Sand, 2G Cell.

I wasn't sure if we could travel east staying in the lagoon. it would seem the US blew a bit of trench here back in the war so we took the first exit ducking out of the lagoon and back in again near the western tip of Pityilu reef.

It didn't take long before the welcome committee came bearing gifts and some fruit. The land owner came out with the usual speech and we asked if it was ok that we anchored there. He was more than happy to have us stay and has made a bit of start to build a landing with some Resort type structure to follow. He too is keen to develop the tourism side and said he may do a paddle by after dark so don't panic.

We were told it was safe to swim on the outer Islands just not on the main land of Manus so much, so Kim and I went for swim and snorkel around his local reef while his son watched over us. There wasn't a lot to see but it was good fun, good exercise and it was sufficient to maintain the illusion that this would offset the sun downers.

A few days after we had left here, we were having a beer on the beach with locals, and they are cutting up what is clearly a huge fish and I mean huge. There was a suggestion it was in the order 6m in length....and then we were told they chased it down in one of their Banana boats onto the reef just off Pityilu reef and it was one of the biggest sharks they had seen.

### **3.15.2.3 Lorengau**

### **3.15.3 Manus South Coast**

Mbuke Island: <http://coraltriangle.blogs.panda.org/coral-reefs/the-amazing-people-of-mbuke-island-manus-papua-new-guinea>

### **3.15.4 Islands SE of Manus**

#### **3.15.4.1 Pam Island (02-30S / 140-20E)**

Pam Island is approx. 02-30 S / 140-20 E, South of the east end of Manus.

**Endless Summer – 2011:** At Pam Island (again, pronounced Pom), Steve made a very bold move and threaded the needle through an opening in the coral reef to a wonderful, shallow anchorage next to what appeared to be a beautiful, uninhabited island with a sheer cliff that had more things growing on it than a cliff like that ought to have; a beautiful spot! We dropped anchor and immediately put our snorkel gear on and jumped in the water to check out the reef. Within about five minutes, the canoes began arriving from the neighboring island, which was inhabited. It turns out the inhabited island is called Pam and the one we were parked beside they called Pamlette. Both are in the Manus Province of PNG.

One of the things we do with any group of villagers upon meeting them is assure them we are friendly and ask if there are any "raskols" in the area (that's the local term for thieves and such). They said we would be safe there and told us that we were the only cruising boat that had ever anchored at, or visited their island; ever! One man, Solomon, took out a manila envelope, handed it to Steve and asked him to open it. Inside was a paper that showed he was the Peace Officer on the island. Another man, Jack, told us that they had "talked it over and decided that if we were friendly, they'd be friendly." That didn't exactly make us feel safer, but we struck up a conversation with Jack who told us more about the village and that the island we were anchored beside was where they did all their gardening. We told Jack we would love to have a restful night, free from interruption, and invited him to come back with no more than three other men at 9:00 the next morning and we would serve them some Peet's coffee! They agreed that after that they would show us Pamlette.

Of course, the next morning, about 15 people showed up! They were nice enough to bring fruit and vegetables for us to have. So, everyone piled onto the boat, we served coffee (even with lots of cream and lots of sugar, it wasn't a hit!), and just as we began to talk a huge storm arrived and lasted about half an hour. So, we all huddled closer and chatted. After coffee, we and Jack got in the dinghy, the others got in their canoes and seven of the men, led by Jack, escorted us to a tiny secluded little eddy at the edge of this wall of rock. We climbed out of the boat onto a huge tree and crept along the tree to the island.

As an aside, Pamlette, is a rock island made of almost 100% obsidian. There was sharp pieces of obsidian laying around everywhere, which of course they walked over in their bare feet. It was impressive to see these big cliffs of obsidian.

We climbed up to the plateau of the island and walked over the entire thing. They explained all the many fruit trees and nut trees that grew there. They showed us the many private gardens where the locals mostly grew yams (not really what we think of as yams, but some sort of root vegetable anyway). They showed us how they turned coconuts into coconut oil. And, they showed us the graves of family members who had died. The top of the island was thick with tropical growth, and was steamy with humidity. We asked if there was a place at the edge of the cliff where we could see the boat and take a picture. They said yes, escorted us to the edge, pulled out a machete and hacked away until - instant clearing! We walked down to the other side of the island where there was a small beach and I was able to take a group picture of Steve, Manjula, and our guides. The men were a great bunch of characters whose names were Jack, Enoch, Beldan, Carl, Johnny, Bushman, and Screw (that's right, Screw!).

We spent all morning exploring Pamlette, then went back to the boat to have lunch, promising to meet them at Pam Island after that. We took the dinghy to the island and were greeted by every kid in the village. There are two villages on the island with a total population of about 200. We were also met by two of the village leaders, Peter and Popson (who is the school superintendent). We were escorted to the steps of their two-room schoolhouse where they gave us an official welcome, mentioning that this was a first for them, and expressing appreciation for the things we brought as gifts. The entire village was crowded around to observe. We gave them school supplies, stickers, puzzles, an atlas, a book on weather, some sports items, and t-shirts for each of our seven hosts from the morning.

After the ceremony, Peter and Popson took us on a tour of the entire island. This island was filled with people who spoke decent English, had built many of their houses with wood, which is rare in these remote areas, had a rainwater collection system (supplied by the Red Cross), and had a nice school building and a well-built Seventh Day Adventist church. One house, which belonged to Peter's sister, was in such a beautiful location that we commented that we wouldn't mind coming back and hanging out for a week. It was near the top of the island, had a nice outdoor deck with a view of Pamlette island, the beautiful light blue water and the reefs: a world class view!

As we walked through the village, people who we had already met would come by and either say something to us or not say anything at all, but just walk with us for a while. Several gave gifts: Manjula received more than one traditional beaded headband which the women wear

when they dance; they gave hand-woven purses to Manjula and to Karen who's picture I had shown them on my camera; and, sensing Steve's comfort with his masculinity, he was given a man's bag! As we left for the boat at the end of the day we let them know we'd be back once more in the morning to say our goodbyes as it was time to move on.

The next morning, Steve and I took the dinghy to the village, bringing a few more things with us. Again, they all came running out to greet us. As we were saying our goodbyes, Jack, our lead guide the day before, came over to us, holding something, and said, "I think you left this here yesterday." He handed me a newly made canoe paddle. In the blade of the paddle he had hand carved "Endless Summer" on one side, and "Pam Is. Manus PNG 2011" on the other. It was an absolutely incredible gift! What's more, that morning the school children had gathered up an enormous amount of fruit (papaya, pomelos, oranges, lemons, coconuts, etc.) and vegetables (assorted root vegetables, chili peppers, greens, etc.) for us to take with us. They told us how much they enjoyed our visit, that we were their friends, and were always welcome on their island. It was an amazing experience! One of the things they said as we were leaving, which struck me as a wonderful attitude with which to live was, "we don't have much, but what we have we want to share." If we could only all live with that philosophy!

So we loaded up the dinghy with what was somewhere between 100 and 150 pounds of produce (!! ) and headed back to Endless Summer. Little did we know how important that produce would be as soon as the next day.

#### **3.15.4.2 Johnson / Johnston Island (02-27S / 147-04E)**

Johnston Island is approx. 02-27S / 147-04E, South of the east end of Manus.

**Endless Summer – 2011:** Because of some rain squalls that hit as we got back to the boat, we didn't leave as early in the morning as we had intended. When we finally got underway, we scuttled the plan for our next destination and decided to move just 15 miles west to another small, remote island; Johnston Island (named by an American in WWII). When we arrived at Johnston we anchored near an absolutely beautiful tropic island which was small, ringed with a beach, lots of palm trees and other tropical growth in the middle, coral reef all around.

Once again, the canoes began arriving from a nearby island with a village. However, unlike the people from Pam Island, they spoke very little English and looked to be quite poor. One of the women who had paddled out said, "we don't have anything for you, but we have need of food and medicine." They invited us to come to the village to meet the village leader. It is also necessary to ask their permission to park the boat near their island. I stayed on the boat and Steve and Manjula took the dinghy to the village. What they reported back was that this was a very poor village of only 30 people, all from the same family, and that they lived in grass huts. Once again, the village leader said that we were the only cruising boat to ever stop near their island. There were only two or three people who spoke even a little English.

It's incredible how things happen in life. We left Pam Island with more food than we could possibly eat and later the same day encountered a group of people whose greatest immediate need was food. So, the next morning we assembled as much food as we could, some stickers, and a medical kit from some of the surplus supplies Steve and Manjula keep on board. Steve and I went to the village and Steve gave them our gifts and explained all of the medical things

he had brought to them. They were very grateful and I think they were a little embarrassed that they didn't have something for us. So, they sent a couple of children off and they returned with two turtle shells for us to take. They know little about endangered species and catch turtles for food. Manjula was a little horrified when we returned with the shells!

### **3.15.4.3 Kalipo Island (02-12S / 147-45E) RASCALS**

**Screensaver – June 2017** – Anchorage 02 12.08 S / 147 45.10 E in 5m, Sand, No Cell service.

When we left Lorengau we had intended to go to Tilianu Island. It seemed nice and was possibly sailable. However the looming black clouds prompted a call for a change in course to Kalipo. So it was we entered a nice well protected lagoon of Kalipo.

We had anchored about 200m away from Watusi and nearer the beach I had planned to visit the next day. The events that follow happened over 30min period and the headlines are with media poetic licence, none the less both the Katrina and Kim were shaken and it did well to highlight the possible real risks.

As I sat enjoying my sun downer beer I could hear shouting going on at Watusi and I could see a couple of Banana boats along side. I could not hear what was being said and at the time I was not sure what was going on. After a few minutes the boats left and headed our way.

Two Banana boats approached at high speed, approaching way to quickly, one running into the Starboard side, and before I could stop him, he was on-board, with another trying to get on at the stern grabbing the outboard, which I just managed to save from being ripped off of Screensaver.

The second boat approached from the other side, also way too quickly and as I fended this off they grabbed a HF cable to hold onto and slow down, before I was able to release his Grip. The Starboard side guys were pissed, and I was able to get him back onto his boat and stop one of the others coming aboard. On the Port side was Dad ( Pochili Karol, Kalwuwin Chandrol) I think also a family member. All were yelling and the situation was very tense for 10-15 Minutes and slowly I was able to calm down the situation from the yelling and get out of here now, to you can leave in the morning. Again they make the point they own the land the reef and the water. The guys on the starboard side, probably all under 30, were returning from Manus having sold there Sea Cucumber and a good price and I guess drunk much of what they earned. Dad on the Port side did not seem pissed but was far from friendly. When I explained my concern's about them coming back he suggested they did not have the fuel to come back and we would be fine.

Both Ken and I slept on deck that night, and Kim took over around 4:00am and in the morning we departed.

I STRONGLY recommend you do not go to this place. While I believe this was just a bunch of pissed locals and we were in no more danger than you might expect from any agro pissed person, the Farther did not appear pissed, and was as far from welcoming as you can get.

There is a definite I am the land holder mentality, I am the owner of the sea the reef and the beach, and rightly or wrongly they are reacting as you might, if someone pitched a tent on your front lawn.

Many westerners should be able to relate to what Alcohol has done to the indigenous people of their own country, I have seen it in NZ and Australia. It is irrelevant ( in this context) who you

blame for this, but know that this problem exists in PNG and I have not seen it or experienced it elsewhere in Asia.

### **3.15.5 Nauna Island**

**Screensaver – June 2017:** After our experience the night before with the local drunks we were pretty keen to get away in the morning. We headed for Nauna Island about 26nm away. The idea being this would break up the trip to New Hanover.

It's a pretty small Island, and the people are said to be friendly. Watusi had an anchorage from another blog, but there was no way I could get to that spot. I would have been in 2m of water probably 10m off the drying reef.

After wandering around looking for a spot a bit like a dog does before they sit (i.e. in circles) it was either too deep or too near the rocks, so I elected to push on. Normally I'm the one anchoring nearer the reef but this time Watusi decided the spot he had was fine and so he stayed.

**2XS – July 2016:** 02-12.340S / 148-11.742E, 10.5m It was late afternoon when we finally, cautiously, dropped anchor. There were whoops and yells from the clifftops – a whole tribe of boys, running through the jungle, climbing trees to wave at us! We had innocently thought this was a deserted island...but no! Within a few minutes we had two canoeloads of boys and men on board, happy to tell us about their cheery little island with a population of 500.

The little boys, so David told us, cheerily, had "forgotten to wear their trousers." Never mind...I took them up to the front of the boat and taught them Heads and shoulders knees and toes, which they loved, and then read them The Waterhole.

As it grew almost too dark to see they hopped off the boat and paddled away, reluctantly. We had a very long day and night ahead of us so we went to bed very early.

At 2am Pete got up to look at the stars on deck and he tripped over two silent young men, in the cockpit... (I am SO glad it wasn't me up there, checking out the stars, possibly stark naked...) "Hmmm, what's going on, fellers?" he asked? "Hello Peter, it is Jack. And Steven. We are looking after the boat for you. We got here at 10 o'clock." They had been sitting there silently and happily all that time. Pete didn't think they were doing much harm so he left them to it and reported back a bit later that they were both fast asleep, curled up on the outdoor carpet.

In the morning, early, I made them a cup of tea and we sent them on their way in their little canoe. We looked around and realised they could have taken: headtorches, ropes, binoculars, snorkels masks flippers, our boatshoes, an umbrella – all big ticket items on the islands. Such lovely gentle harmless boys (16 years old.) But I hope they don't do this too often; I imagine that some people would be so nervous and terrified they would be shot, or at least tasered!

### 3.15.6 Hermit Islands



Figure 3-1 Soggy Paws Passage Through Hermits (Red in Feb, Yellow Oct)

Our anchorages are indicated above with white stars. All of our anchorages are available as downloadable GPX files, from Terry's Topics (originally hosted on YachtValhalla.net but now on [svsoggypaws.com](http://svsoggypaws.com)). <http://svsoggypaws.com/TerrysTopics.htm> Download the doc file and from there find the PNG Anchorage waypoints. If you want our track files, email me (see cover page for email address).

Our anchorages are also detailed in the sections below.

#### 3.15.6.1 Western Pass and West Side Anchorages

**Soggy Paws – Feb 2019:** The West Pass is wide open and easy. If you have satellite charts, you could arrive at night as Field Trip did, and just toss the anchor when you get in shallow enough water. Our tracks through Hermits are shown above. We only draw 3.1 feet, but had a buddy boat doing the same track that drew 6 ft.

**Field Trip – September 2017 – Night Arrival:** The sporadic sailing on our passage from New Hanover to Luf had delayed our arrival time to 8 pm that night. We had to make a decision. Go through the wide west pass at night, or drift around outside all night until daybreak.

Recently, there had been news of a few family yachts that had run aground on reefs - one that was attempting to enter a pass after dark. We checked, double-checked, zoomed in, zoomed out, compared charts and satellite images, read blogs and compendium notes. Finally, it was decided that we would enter the pass after sunset. I won't say that doubts didn't criss-cross in my mind, but the pass was over 3 km wide and very deep, without obstructions. We could get through the pass and anchor out in the open area just to the south in 20ish meters. Navigations went off without a hitch, we anchored and slept for the night before navigating further into the lagoon to drop the hook near the village at Luf Island.

Anchorage: 01 33.43 S / 145 00.19 E ok in light SE Winds

Note that there are shallow reefs about 300-400m to the west of this anchorage, so take this into account when arriving if you do come in here at night.

**Screensaver – May 2017: Maron Island** (Hermit Group) Anchor in 01 32.92 S / 145 00.65 E in Coral rubble, 17m, No cell service. We left Pihun in the Ninigos and moved closer to the SE entrance, just to give us maximum daylight hours to get to the Hermit Group, not knowing exactly what we would strike current or wind wise as we head to the Hermit Group.

The plan was if we could sail NE at 4-5kn we would, but if we had to motor, then we may as well burn the fuel going the shortest path (SE), and that's what happened we motored the whole way and I think the sails maybe added 0.5 to 1knt. Apart from one short squall the trip was uneventful, neither of us caught fish, although I'm used to that, and current was not strong. In fact at times around the Islands to my surprise it gave is a push.

On approach I did the usual chart checks and proceeded to adjust the chart off set. The problem with that was the chart was out by over a 1nm and my Raymarine equipment only allows for 3500 ft offset. To date I have not had a chart this far out. The reef came about 1.2nm before it should according to the chart, and anchoring on one side of the Island actually showed you on the other side. Once again I was very glad of my Google Images, I collected some weeks and months before. However these will run out in a month or so roughly as I only took Images down to Bougainville.

We got in ok and crossed the reef in about 8m of water. Once inside the general depth was around 25-35m. We have had mixed reports about swimming here as to the existence of Crocodiles so no one actually leapt into the water on arrival, and instead we focused our eye's on the water just above the rim of the glass. As we came in Kim did spot something, and it was in the order of 2-3m but by the time I got there, it was to late to be sure what it was. Locals later confirmed it probably was a crock as they lived in this bay.

My HF Radio has been struggling to get in contact with any of the sailmail stations. It turned out to be a poor ground that almost burned up my tuner.

**Totem – November 2012 – Kocheran Island:** We staged for an early morning departure behind Kocheran, one of the small islands on the west side of the atoll at 01 34.12 S / 144 58.51 E in 54' sand.



**Forza – April 2010:** We entered through the wide West Entrance and because the sun was setting we headed for the nearest anchorage to the south of Maron Island as per the guide. This was relatively easy and we dropped anchor in 14m of water in pos'n 01-32.87 S / 145-00.59 E. We had a visit from a local named Campbell and his wife Nellie. They were from Ninigo and were building a house for his sister, he thought they would be there about 3 months before they returned to Ninigo. Anyway he was very friendly and gave us veggies and fruit in return for the usual gifts we had. I helped him try to fix a small outboard motor but to no avail, anyway in payment he gave us a crayfish and a coconut crab which was more than welcome.

Unlike some of the other countries we have visited the people here in PNG are not 'pushy' and have, in most cases, excellent English, they are a pleasure to talk to and are always interested in what we are doing and where we have been. Again there was a visiting yacht log that appeared, which we were happy to put our comments in. Also, no fuel available.

We stayed at this anchorage 4 nights before departing through the NW Entrance. This entrance is quite easy but again sounder and eyeballs are the order of the day, there are no markers.

NOTE: We are using the latest C-map NT+ cartridge and for the Hermit group, our 12m range was accurate but once we went to the lower, more detailed, ranges it jumped at least a mile to the east so beware.

### **3.15.6.2 Mantas / High School Anchorage**

**Obiwan – December 2022:** We stopped here hoping to swim with the mantas. We looked for Bob to ask him to take us to see mantas. Unfortunately we found out that Bob passed away 6 months ago.

There is a young man that is trying to take Bob place. He took us in the pass looking for mantas but we didn't find any.

He told us that Bob could always find mantas but he doesn't know how to do the same.

**Soggy Paws – Feb 2019: 01-32.506 S / 145-01.996 E 8-10 ft deep.** We had a strong NW wind when we (4 boats) arrived at the Hermits from the Ninigos. I had a couple of anchor spots from prior cruisers on the SE side of Manta Pass (where Screensaver anchored), but in the winds we had, these would have been somewhat exposed to westerlies. And after a week at rolly Longan (in strong W-NW winds), we were ready for a quiet anchorage. So we came in through the West Pass, north across the top of the Akib Island, and down through Manta Pass (between E Akib and W Luf), and anchored on the west side of Manta Pass. Two of our little group anchored out in the deeper water (and more exposed to winds coming through the pass). We (a catamaran) opted to sneak our way onto the sand shelf and anchor in shallow water. We fit 2 cats in two big sand areas (and there was at least one other). Some of the bommies in the sand area are quite shallow, so be careful and make sure you have swinging room. With winds going from WNW to NNW we swirled around quite a bit on anchor. The tidal range (at least right now) is only about 1 ft, so once you're in with a couple feet under the keel, you are good.

We had heard about the new High School under construction in the Hermits. Oscar at Longan told us that it would open in April, but when we took a walk up to see it, we found that there were already students there.

There is now a small village at the east end of this island (Akib on our CM93 charts), where people working on construction of the school, and maybe some school teachers, live. In the mornings there was a steady stream of people walking down the beach toward the school.

One of the teachers told us that there is supposed to be cell service coming.

**Swimming with the Mantas:** Bob, who lives on the beach at the western tip of Luf Island, came by in his canoe just minutes after we arrived. He welcomed us to the Hermits and offered to take us swimming with the mantas. He said it would be best first thing in the morning (it's tidal). He told us there was no anchoring fee—some people wanted to impose one but he had told them no. But the fee to swim with the mantas was no K20 per person. I was really keen to swim with the mantas, but a sore I acquired on Longan had become infected, and I was boat bound. But 3 of our group went over in the morning and had a lovely time, under Bob's direction, swimming with the mantas. There's a cleaning station that Bob can direct you to, where the mantas hang out.

With minimal tidal range, the pass where the mantas are doesn't have much current.

**Screensaver – May 2017:** 01 32.57 S / 145 02.98 E 11m, Sand, No Cell service. Where we had anchored the previous days was a little exposed plus it was said we could swim with the Mantas at Luf.

Anchored in amongst some coral it wasn't too bad although not the sort of spot I would want to leave Screensaver unattended for many hours.

Bob is the official Tourist host here, and has been on the island for many years. We signed his book had a good chat, got all the local run down. It would seem PNG are trying to crank up the tourism side and Bob had recently been recognised and now his role here was official.

When he said you can swim with the Mantas just out there, pointing 10m off the beach, I must admit I was a bit skeptical. Paying (20 Kina) to see nature's untamed wild life is a bit hit and miss, but in this case Bob has it down pat. The weather had been a bit windy and a bit of swell so sadly the clarity wasn't great. We walked out a few metres off the beach and swam another 5 or 10m, there below us were two Mantas more or less sitting there. A great experience and so easy it was almost unbelievable.

Next we did a bit of bush climbing which certainly got the cardiovascular system working. Bob took us up to one of the vantage points on Luf that is also where he does some garden work. You likely would not find this track on your own, but once started there is a rope that you need to use to haul yourself up and believe me you will need it. Some 3 weeks later I still have the blisters on my hand to prove it, so you will earn your beer.

**Field Trip – Sep 2017:** Anchorage: 01 32.1460 S / 145 02.4136 E Be careful and anchor back in this area as there are lots of mantas and the owner of the area does not want boats anchoring too close. You must go ashore and arrange for swimming with the Mantas. Bob is the guide and a nice guy. There was no charge for us, but we did give him some trade items as he seemed grateful.

NOTE: Please don't plane on your dingy in the Manta Pass area. There are mantas here and Bob will get very upset at you if you plane in your tender.

### **3.15.6.3 Village Anchorage at Luf Island**

**Field Trip – September 2017 – Luf Island:** The bay is deep, with very few spots less than 35 meters. Originally, we anchored in a spot up close to the village, but after a few harrowing squalls blew through, our nerves forced us to move out to the 10 meter pinnacle quite a way from shore. The anchor set well, and we had plenty of room to swing (or drag, heaven forbid). It made our dinghy commute a trek, but at least we had peace of mind!

Ashore, things were quiet. A few children greeted us as well as some folks that were there visiting to do health check-ups for the government Health Department. Turns out, all the teachers and many of the students and community members had gone to the Ninigo Islands for the Independence Day futbol tournament, so it was a bit of a ghost town. The village tour guide, Ben, was up working in the bush, so we just chatted for a while with the few people we could find, and then asked them to let him know he was welcomed to come aboard for tea when he returned.

In a few hours, he brought us the visitor's book to sign and welcomed us to the island, apologizing that he had missed our initial arrival. As we talked, we gathered around the Visitors Book and squealed with delight each time we spotted the entry of cruising friends who had already passed through here. It was like looking through an old high school yearbook, remembering faces and wondering where they were now and what they'd experienced while they were here - relishing the notes that were written in their familiar handwriting with drawings and photos attached.

Mark was curious as to the number of boats that visit each year, so Elizabeth made a spreadsheet on her iPad. He flipped through the pages and called out each entry while she kept a running tally by year. Then, she converted it to a bar graph that displayed all the data. 2011 saw by far the most yachts (45), and the lowest (4) in 2003. So far in 2017, we were the thirteenth boat to visit. It was a fun exercise in collecting and analyzing data as we sat around and tried to figure out which factors contributed to the high and low years. The economy? The PNG political unrest periods? Weather patterns? I imagined sending the case into the guys that do the Freakanomics podcast to see what conclusions they could come up with!

Ben ended up hanging out and eating dinner with us - creamy potato and veggie soup and quick biscuits with jam. He shared stories with us and made sure we had all the information we needed about the village - no crocs nearby, some malaria cases recently, trading is appreciated. We asked about swimming with the mantas and about diving as well. He said that he really enjoyed diving and he'd gone a couple other times with cruisers, but we refrained from extending an invitation to come along with us. We just don't feel comfortable not knowing someone's training or experience so are very cautious when bringing anyone diving with us who does not have an actual certification. In this culture, retribution is a very acceptable way of dealing with things. If someone gets hurt due to something you have done, their family has every right to come after you for money or for revenge. In fact, we were told in Honiara that if we rented a car and accidentally hit a pedestrian, we should flee or risk being hurt or killed ourselves in retribution! That little tidbit of information has left us a bit more guarded than usual.

**Seabreeze Restaurant at Luf:** It is amazing how industrious and patient the people of the Luf village are! Frieda and Nancy have been working to get a restaurant up and running on their tiny piece of paradise since a few years ago when Tom and Susie on SV Adina passed through here and made the suggestion. News spread among the cruiser community and the following year,

Sara and Phil on SV Loch Marin contributed a beautiful set of plates and utensils to the culinary cause. By the time we arrived, a year later, the Seabreeze Restaurant (named by Phil) was ready for customers! I loved seeing such a culmination of efforts and resources between the cruisers and the islanders bring new opportunities.

Frieda and Nancy had outdone themselves! I'm sure it was an all-day affair to cook the buffet of local fare that graced our table that afternoon - taro, fried fish, fish cooking in coconut milk, rice, fresh fruit, and even a sweet treat! One of my personal favorites was the 'pudding' made from cassava and flavored with sweet bananas. I could not help but think of how resourceful these two ladies were, and how many of their precious, limited resources we were using up! They were proud as punch to be hosting us, though, and I was grateful to eat out for a change!

**Screensaver – June 2017:** 01 30.91 S / 145 04.764 E: Anchor in 16m, Sand No Cell Service. We took a bit of a punt that mother nature would be kind to us and anchored directly exposed to SE so we could get a good start early in the next morning for our run to Manus ESE about 110nm.

As it happened, mother nature obliged us. She threw a little water our way and puffed a bit but all was well. Got a bit of walk around the local village and beer, so all was good.

**Tenaya – 2015:** There is no wind during our three-day motor west to the Hermit Islands. They are surrounded by a barrier reef and the island of Luf, our destination, is wrapped in its own reef. It is shaped like a barbell, with bays on both sides of the narrow bar.

The village is built along this low section, while at each end hills burst with palm trees and thick foliage. We hope for good light, but dark clouds roll in as we enter the lagoon. Thunder rumbles in the distance. We head for Carola Bay, on the south side, and choose the beefiest looking mooring. It is very close to a reef.

No sooner have we strung our lines through than a squall hits and blows over 25 knots. I hunker down at the bow in pelting rain watching our position to shore to be sure we don't blow down on the reef.

The next morning two young women in a leaking canoe paddle out to greet us. Lorraine teaches sixth grade and Baxter runs the dispensary. We ask about buying diesel, and they say Matthew will be leaving shortly for Manus Island and will be back in two days. He'll take our containers. We passed Manus but did not stop because it is not a safe place for yachts or their crew.

People give us delicious pawpaw, mangos, pineapples, bananas and oranges, and ask for basic food items in return. We accept only what we can eat, because big rats recently escaped from a Malaysian fishing boat and are ravaging the gardens.

#### **3.15.6.4 East Pass and East Anchorages**

**Soggy Paws – Oct 2019:** We arrived at the east pass at nearly noon on a very sunny day after having overnighted from Manus. And we had excellent satellite charts. It was easy navigating through the pass and through the reef to the SW corner. See our tracks in the charlet at the top of the Hermits Section.

**Field Trip – Sep 2017 – Diving:** We anchored just inside the pass in light SE winds at 01 31.89 S / 145 07.76 E. We dove both the northern pass and the southern pass. The southern

pass was much better, for some reason. This was a very good dive with clear water and LOTS of fish, large schools of Baracuda and some HUGE grouper. Can be lots of current, but that is what makes it so fishy.

**Screensaver – June 2017:** The exit from Hermit on the East side is one that really needs day light. There are some markers on the inside that lead you most of the way to the exit, but after that, its all up to you.



We had on board the South East Asia Cruising guide which I bought back in Darwin and had found to be pretty useless not covering many of the places we went and not intuitive. Anyway lo and behold, it was there and it suggested the route you can see (Purple line) that we took. A little tight and I would not want another boat coming the other way or to turn around, but otherwise it was fine. I think we got down to about 3m under the keel.

### **3.15.6.5 Alacrity Harbor (NE corner)**

**Soggy Paws – Feb 2019:** Bob at Manta Pass had told us he could navigate us into Alacrity Harbor, by going out the SE pass and up the outside, and in the pass at Alacrity. But (a) we wanted to stay there and depart from there, and didn't want to have to worry about getting Bob back home and (b) after a careful look at the satellite imagery, we decided that we could probably navigate ourselves up there without much trouble, in the inside of the reef.

It was fairly easy to do so in good light—the shallow spots show up easily with good sun. The only dicey spot was the narrow pass going up into Alacrity Harbor, at approx 01 29.725 S / 145 08.140 E, and here we still found depths of 6 meters. It was so easy our friends on a monohull with a 6ft draft undertook the trip on their own the next day.

The second question was—could we find good anchorage spots for 4 boats? The answer is a resounding YES!. There is a ridge of sand about 30 ft deep running SW and NE in the deeper water. This sand area was fine for anchoring, and everyone had plenty of swinging room—though with steady NW-NNW winds 10-15 knots, we didn't do much swinging.

The third questions was—how swelly would it get at high tide? Not at all! Even though Micronesia was reporting high surf alerts, and the GFS showed 2m swell, we hardly felt a thing, just a chop in the harbor when the wind got up. The tidal range here is so small. And even

though we were anchored right inside the pass and could see the swell breaking on the reef, it never came inside.

This might be a great place for surfers in the NW season, and also kiteboarders.

Anchorage:	35 ft deep sand	01-28.72 S / 145-08.04 E
	8 ft deep sand	01-28.46 S / 145-07.97 E
	6 ft deep sand	01-28.55 S / 145-07.81 E

### **3.15.6.6 Northern Side Anchorages & Northern Pass**

**L'il Explorers – October 2018 – Alabachi Island:** 01 29.195 S / 145 01.121 E We anchored in a nice sand spot and enjoyed playing on this island with no one on it!

**Screensaver – May 2017 - Jaluan/Arkeb:** Anchor in 20m, Sand, No Cell. This was just around the corner and looked like it would be well protected in its lagoon. I was expecting a little rain and perhaps some squalls so this place would provide the best protection.

We spent a few days here just relaxing. Not a lot of swimming was done as Watusi had spotted a Croc, but I did manage a quick dip while I was burning off some rubbish. It looked like a nice place, if only one could dive in, snorkel etc.

We got our rain and a couple of squalls pushing 35knts that came with plenty of rain to fill our water tanks which meant laundry was coming.

### **Bird Island (SW Side)**

**Thyme – December 2012:** It was another calm and beautiful day that saw us sail (read motor) into the Hermits.

The fishing here was crazy - we were catching so much fish the freezer was full, the locals had stopped fishing and we discovered the dingy was too small for Hermit Island fish.

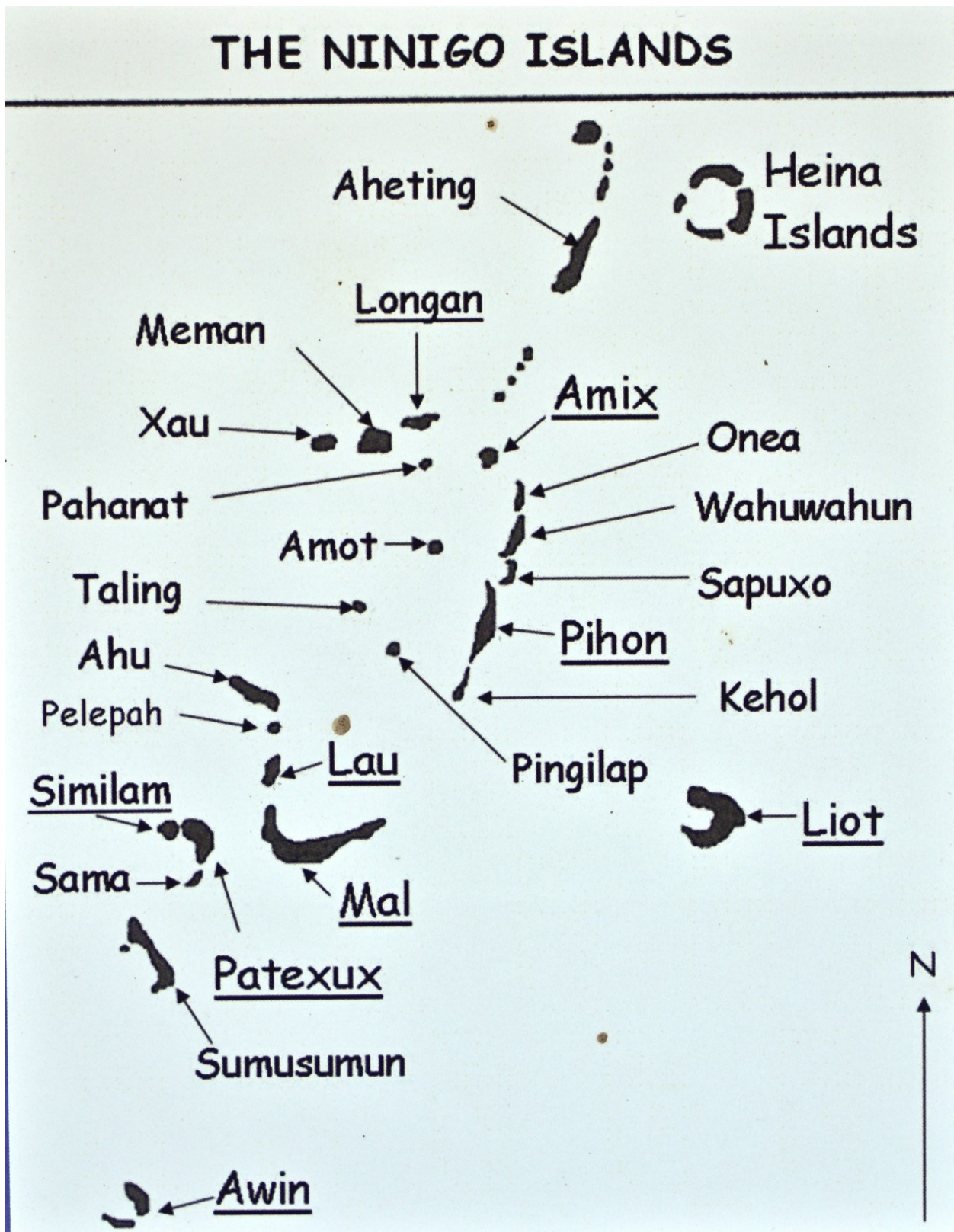
With the weather remaining calm we headed to the south western rim of the atoll to a place we called Bird Island. All eyes were underwater as we dived the outer edge of the reef. We saw turtles, spotted eagle rays, white tip, black tip and grey reef sharks, a huge array of reef and schooling fish as well as an abundance of critters. The water was so clear, at 30m you would think you were still in 10m.

When we weren't diving we were exploring Bird Island. Covered in Noddy's, Booby's and Frigates nesting. It was a bird lovers and photographers paradise - here are some of Simons shots.

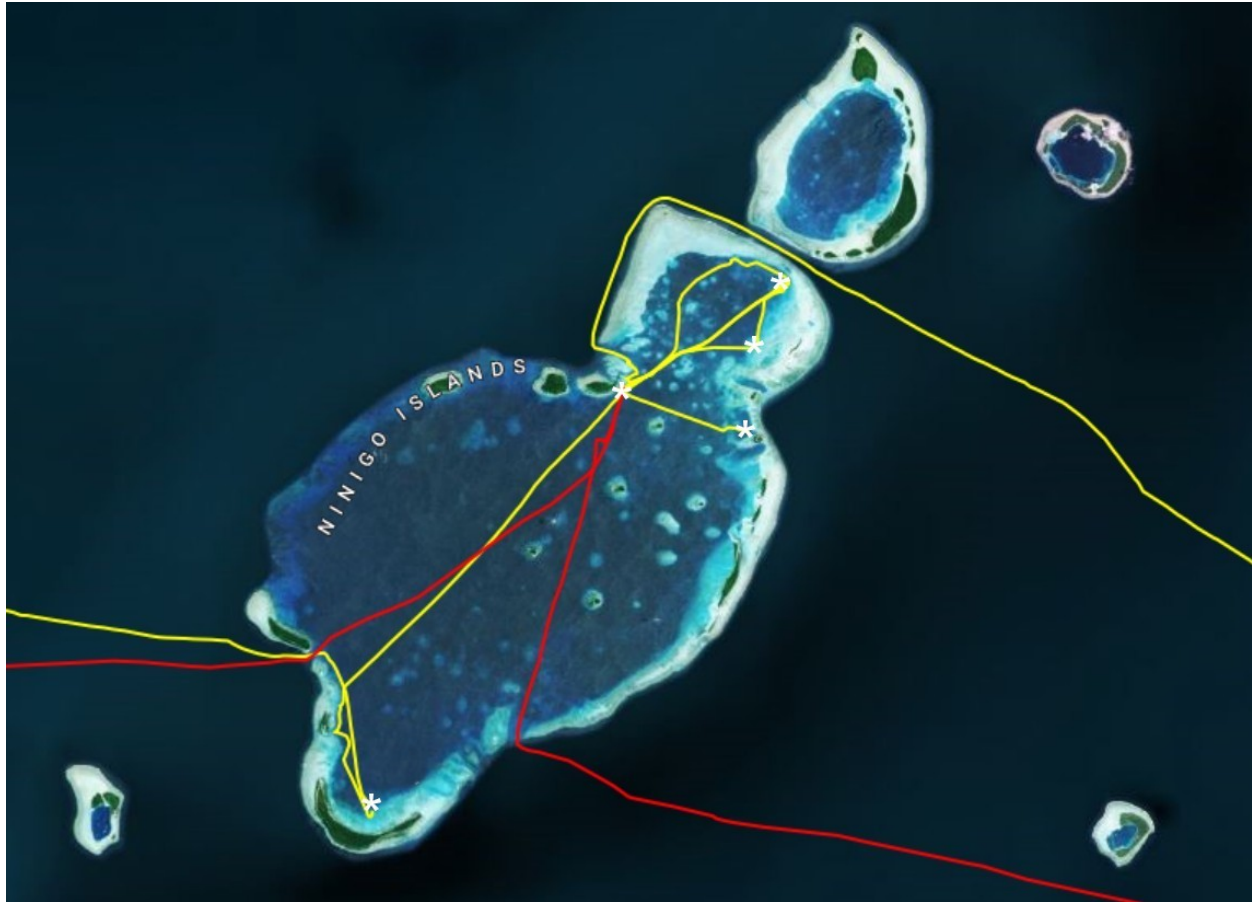
I guess all good things must come to an end and while waiting for some wind we've let time get away from us. It's Xmas in 3 days - if we were to leave now we could get to Madang by Xmas eve but we'll probably motor all the way. Do we want fish and lobster with tinned veges for lunch?



3.15.7 Ninigo Island Group



Source Unknown



*Figure 3-2 Soggy Paws' Tracks through Ninigos (Red is Feb, Yellow October)*

Our anchorages are indicated above with white stars. All of our anchorages are available as downloadable GPX files, from Terry's Topics (originally hosted on YachtValhalla.net but now on [svsoggypaws.com](http://svsoggypaws.com)). <http://svsoggypaws.com/TerrysTopics.htm> Download the doc file and from there find the PNG Anchorage waypoints. If you want our track files, email me (see cover page for email address).

### **Rainbow Safari – 7-15 April 2022**

We found the people in the Ninigos just as amazingly friendly and generous as everyone has described. We were told that we were the first boat since the start of the Covid pandemic two years ago, and they asked us to pass on this message to all cruising friends: the Ninigos are open, please come and visit!

If you have a chance to bring things for them: 2-part epoxy resin, fiberglass sheets, big fishing lures, diving goggles, wood working tools, (old) 12V batteries, solar panels are all welcome.

We arrived in the Ninigos in the morning after a three day passage from Biak. Winds were about 20 knots from the Northwest, waves around 2m. The Navionics mobile app has detailed depth tracks through the main Western pass, not showing anything shallower than 30m as you enter the lagoon. We weren't too sure what kind of wave build up to expect though, so decided to loop around the South and enter the lagoon from opposite the weather. The Navionics App had no



depth info for the Longan pass and showed only 2m in the one South of Ahu Island, but the villagers later told us that the Navy patrol boat usually comes through S of Ahu, and that the pass should be deep. We did not verify.

### **Southeast Pass**

The Southeast pass had waypoints from other yachts. We followed these and never saw less than 10m depth.

Ninigo Southeast Pass waypoints:

01°22.096S 144°15.123E

01°21.732S 144°15.163E

01°21.092S 144°15.444E

### **Amut and Pihon**

We anchored at Amut Island for protection from the NW winds, and later when the winds shifted to E we moved to Pihon, using the anchorages from the Compendium. Both had great holding in sand - we had gusts above 40 knots blow through and no issues.

It is worth noting that the school in Pihon now has a surprisingly fast satellite Internet connection and free wifi - they happily shared the password with us.

### **Longan**

We crossed to Longan and anchored in 12m, sand, at 01°13.518S 144°17.749E

There are concrete remains of a failed jetty project closer to the other Longan anchorage given in the Compendium. We had reasonable protection from a Northerly squall that came through. Oscar and Senly told us that for protection from Easterlies/Southeast winds it is possible to pass between Longan and Meman and then pass into the little basin NW of the Eastern tip of Longan. I trust them to know their reef, but we did not try it out as we left through the pass N of Longan the next morning. Shallowest depth was 11m and the pass is wide and easy:

01°13.167S 144°18.239E

01°12.885S 144°18.366E

01°12.642S 144°18.351E

01°12.481S 144°17.795E

01°12.386S 144°17.493E

01°12.358S 144°17.370E

01°12.327S 144°17.069E

We passed through the channel between Ninigo and the Pelleluhu Islands in rain and 20 knot winds - the channel is wide and deep and easy.

### **Heina**

The Heina Islands are an absolute highlight and possibly better than the main lagoon. We had the friendliest welcome from Lemki and Martha who live at the N end of Laualau. We were asked to join their family reunion and invited to a special feast.

The pass into Heina is less than 20m wide, there can be a current that offsets you to the side, and the shallowest point is at the outer edge of the pass. Depth rises very rapidly from 100, to 30, to (o) shallow. The 2m waves we had outside stopped as we entered the pass. We were in between tides on our way in and had 2m depth (1.5 on the gauge plus offset approx 60cm). Within an hour of high tide on the way out we had approx 3m. I adjusted my satellite image waypoints based on our track in and out. These are accurate, but I highly recommend to time for high tide, have a lookout at the bow, and make sure you have good light.

01°07.900S 144°28.631E

01°07.884S 144°28.652E

01°07.875S 144°28.684E

01°07.847S 144°28.735E

01°07.840S 144°28.743E

01°07.824S 144°28.761E

01°07.763S 144°28.854E

01°07.763S 144°28.879E

01°07.753S 144°28.963E

We anchored in 18m Sand at 01°07.490S 144°29.974E

The water was beautiful and we had some great swims from the boat, but Lemki suggested it might be safer to swim at the beach as they do have a crocodile in the lagoon. The dinghy channel to their house loops N across the reef shelf, aiming for the point of the next island, past a shallower reef, and then back towards the point of Lualau.

**Soggy Paws – Feb and October 2019:** We spent a week at the Ninigos on the way into PNG in February and again on the way out of PNG in October. Both times were great visits. We spent most of our time at Longan Island (not really a great anchorage when the wind is blowing out of the east). But we did anchor for a day at Amik and in the northern sandy area, to do some diving, and also down at the southern island of Mal. If you had the time, you could easily spend a month or two visiting in these islands.

Our time at Longan is covered here:

<http://svsoggypaws.blogspot.com/2019/02/longan-island-ninigos-png.html>

Unfortunately, we have yet to fill in a blog for our October visit.

**Field Trip – March 2018:** Here are some Ninigo Island words I picked up at a “language session” at Luf Island in the Hermits.

Good morning - Le tuh (lay-too)

Good afternoon - Aloha Solian (aloha so-lee-ahn)

You alright? - O e wi? (oh ay wee)

I’m alright. - Na e wi. (nah ay wee)

Thank you. - Ke mu lik wanin. (keh moo leek wah nen)

What is your name? Axa maita (the x makes the throaty g, like in German - ah ghah my tah)

**Ninigo Islands, July - August 2018, Lil Explorers** The Ninigo Islands will become a favorite of anyone who ventures to these remote atolls. There are no shops, a few medical clinics, and the friendliest, most giving people you will meet. There are no requests for anything, though sometimes we were asked if we had a GPS, paint, or epoxy for sale. It was never expected that we would give it.

We arrived at the eastern pass of Ninigo early in the morning. (01 22'.607 S & 144 14'.465 E). The Reef edges were clearly visible and the depth remained around 30' for the entire pass. We anchored inside the pass just on the left side, with the hope of diving the pass, but the weather did not cooperate.

We moved up to **Amut island** (01 16'.300S & 144 20'.061E) the following morning. Anchoring was great in about 60' on clear sand. On the eastern side of Amut island the water is deep right to the beach, where the sand falls off sharply. There are two families that live on the island, who were very friendly, and giving. They would offer us a meal when we went to shore, and always have some food for us from their garden. We reciprocated with gifts of clothing, some small solar lights, and a dinner on our boat. They were never any "ask-ums" and they truly love to have visitors. The north side of the island has some coral for reasonable snorkeling where we saw lionfish, eels, and a variety of fish.

Next we went to **Pihon**, (01 17'.019S & 144 20'.521E). It was windy and squally, so we anchored out a ways from the village as we did not have good visibility. Again the holding was good in sand with no coral. Pihon is the most populous island, and many people were building/repairing their sailing outrigger canoes for the big week long canoe race from August 22nd through the 26th. Some of the outriggers are in the 40' to 50' range. In the last race, the winner was sailing at 20 knots per their onboard GPS. These incredible speeds are achieved with light, long narrow hulls, and super-sized sails. During the race there will be capsizes and damage because they are "sailing on the edge".

From Pihon, we hopped over to **Amik Island**. (01 14'.798S & 144 21'.413E). You have to wiggle through the reefs a little to get to this island, but the anchoring is easy, and the village is beautiful. There is also a nice pass for diving on the northern side of the island. The pass is big enough for a dingy, and the diving just outside the pass was teeming with all types/sizes of fish. There is also a large sand pit about 30' deep that one could anchor on if you are outside the Reef.

Our next stop was **Longan** Island. (1 13'.338S & 144 17'.901E). This is a beautiful island with a wide dingy pass to the sandy beach. This is a popular stop for boats, and you will be invited for food most times that you go ashore. This island is primarily used by the people of Amik Island as a school. Families will move with their children to Longan Island, for the schooling years, then move back to Amik to be with friends and extended families. The snorkeling was also good at the pass.

As the trade winds started, we moved over to **Mal** (01 23'.923S & 144 11'.581E) and anchored in 35' way off shore. From this anchorage we scouted out a passage through the reefs. This would be easy for a monohull, but with our 31' width took a little pre-planning. We moved to (01 24'.313S & 144 11'.771E) where it was 7' deep at low tide, and found more protection from the winds, and a much easier commute to shore. The village here is composed of three brothers,

their wives, their children, and their grandchildren. This will probably be one of your favorite places in Mal. The school and medical center are on the west side of the island. This is the best equipped medical center in the Niningos and Hermits. There is also an airstrip on Mal that can land a chartered plane.

While at Mal we arranged with a fiberglass local boat (Bruce-Sea's boat that he uses to go to the mainland with) with a 40hp motor to take us to **Pataku** Island. They can only take you there around high tide. Rumor has it there is a pass, but where we went in, there was no pass. Bruce-Sea just waited for a lull in the waves, gunned the motor, and surfed us over the Reef. Pataku loves having visitors, and they had everyone down at the shore singing us a welcome song, then there was a feast served to us with a traditional dance show by the school kids. Then we were shown the island with no less than three meals served to us as we made our tour. This was an epic experience!

From Mal we went to a deserted island (01 20'.468S & 144 10'.717) just inside the main pass. We had a great time on the island, and also enjoyed diving around the outside of the pass.

Our last anchorage was at **Ahu** Island (01 19'.047S & 144 09'.365E) where there is a huge sandy area about 35' deep. There are only 4 families living on this large island and they are in the center facing the outer Reef. We walked for an hour and didn't arrive at the village. You can only dinghy over at high tide. We met a few of them sitting waiting for the tide to come up before they could paddle their outriggers home. We loved playing on the sandspit at the western tip of Ahu Island and there is beautiful coral to the north. It provided a nice quiet time to say good bye and wait for the trade winds to come and carry us off to the Philippines. It is easy access to the pass.

**Screensaver – May 2017:** Anchor in 18m, Sand, No cell service. The plan to get a sailing line worked, but as for there being any amount of wind, well that didn't really happen until the last 2 or 3 hours. The current when we left was pretty strong and the further east we pointed the worse it got. However the further out or off shore we went the weaker it got. In the end not a lot of current, but yep what was there was against us.

Ninigo is a group of Islands, many in the main group connected by reefs, which provides a bit of a lagoon effect. Crossing into these can be challenging and this was no exception. The chart showed nothing of concern and the standard Google image didn't show anything of any help, and the other charts were useless.

**Approach from SW:** As we approached the outer reef of course when we don't want it the wind got up giving us a short chop and about a 1/2 m sea. With sails down, we approached the outer reef.....

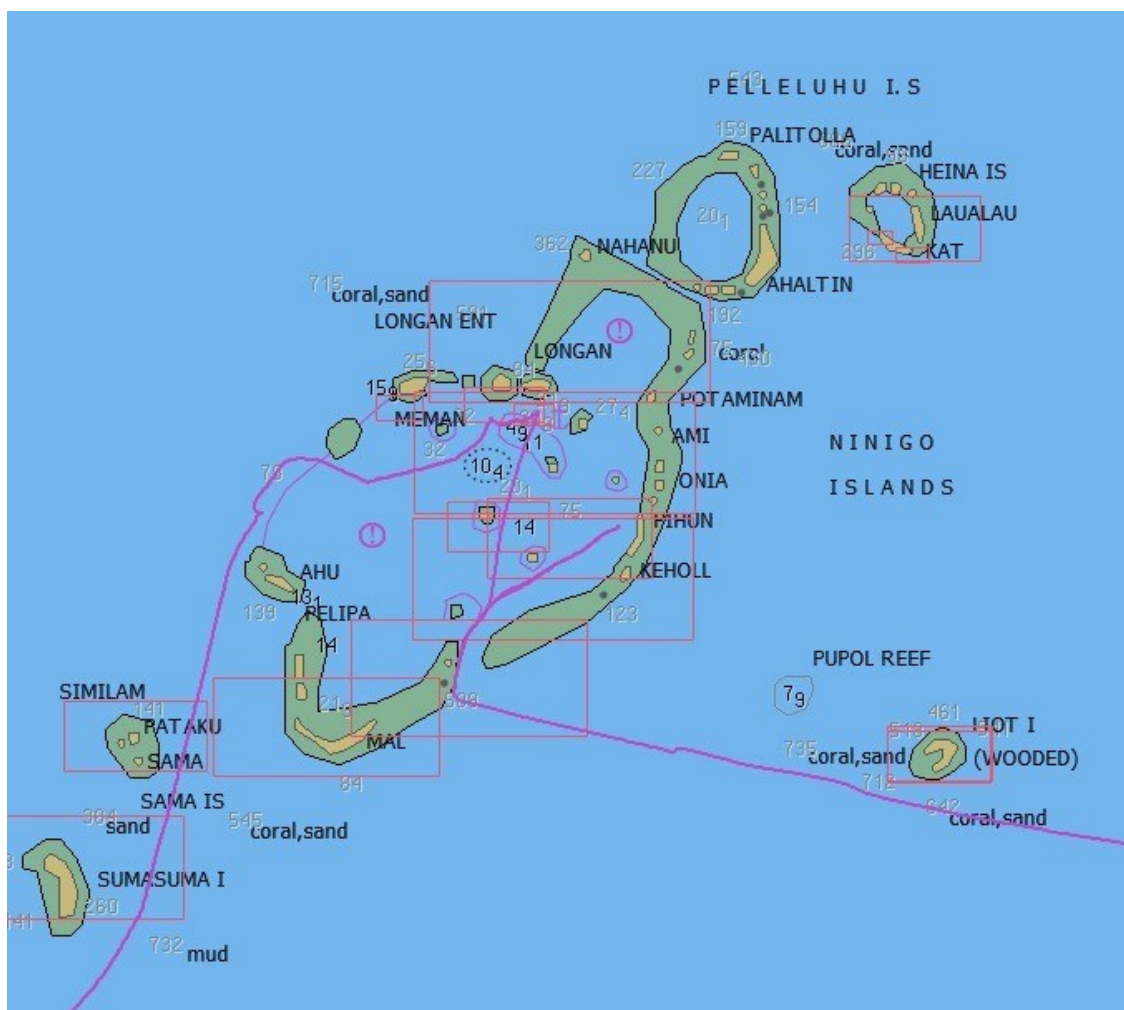
It went from 100m+ to 15m in couple of seconds, and then down to less than 3m under the boat.

At that I did an about face and hailed Watusi to say I'm not crossing here. It turned out that we were right on the edge of shallow part of the reef. We found a much better spot to **enter the reef** at 01-14.882S 144-10.779E without any more problems.

Using a GoogleEarth image, I picked my way through the maze to our anchorage. For the most part once inside the depth was around 24-34m, but one could not get complacent as there were plenty of shallow spots to avoid.

With anchor finally down, a drink followed by breakfast just seemed right even though it was around lunch time, and hopefully we would not get any visitors until after we had some sleep. Clearly I must have sent these vibes out by telepathy because as I looked over at Watusi already had visiting canoes. Fortunately most times we are together they go to Watusi first, at least until Ken sends them my way.

The locals here were the nicest I have encountered in many years and weren't pushy in looking for stuff from us, plus they were quite happy to offer whatever they could many times asking nothing in return. After a few days a few requests came, but it was not an expectation and it wasn't the only reason for their hospitality and after all we had been eating crayfish for a few days. Louisaides is a good example of the locals being spoilt, and now has the expectation that yachts will all come bearing many big gifts, and no trading is necessary. I was asked for a generator and solar panels on my last visit there.



There are two or three Islands in the NW corner which is where we spent most of our time (Longan: 01 13.37 S / 144 17.88 E). The anchorage was not startling and in fact the one at Pihun towards the East was much better. But the people here were very interactive and welcoming, so we stayed longer.

We were invited to their own welcoming dinner just for us. Something that usually only happens on Rallies. They call one of the Islands the Garden Island and it has unusually rich soil, so there was no shortage of vegetables and only a little "weed" and of course fish, plus the sea cucumber which they sell for a good price.

The place is nicely looked after and clearly they have pride in what they have. Oscar and his wife Karen were happy to show us all around the Island and were excellent hosts even singing us a welcome song at our dinner.

We had a great few days here. We managed a bit of snorkelling around the inner reefs.

Ken from Watusi went sailing with the boys on one of their local boats, and not to be outdone, the ladies picked up Katrina on their own boat.

We anchored at Pihun for a couple of nights at 01 17.03 S / 144 20.50 E

In another day or two we would depart here for the next leg to the Hermit Islands. This leg is a big day, probably departing before we can clearly see, so we decided to do a run down to the Southern exit during the day and make a track we could follow out. I had already marked up a few waypoints for this exit but the Google image wasn't great, and locals were giving us directions seemingly elsewhere. A bit like asking a Queens Lander for directions.... they could send you anywhere, of course they would not have seen too many Google Satellite images so its a bit challenging for them also. So we invited them to come with us on our boats and they could sail back from Pihun. The path they chose was probably 50m from mine in the end and I suspect mine might have been better, but we now had a track out, albeit that the last bit left us with about 4m under our keel.

Inside Waypoint 01-21.3091S 144-15.409E

Outside waypoint 01-22.2213S 144-15.231E

On our last night at Ninigo, we moved to just inside this pass, for an early departure the next morning. Our anchor spot was at 01 20.15 S / 144 15.88 E

**Carina – Sep 2016 – Diving at Ninigo:** We were chatting with Oscar and Justin yesterday after they helped clean our bottom. We mentioned your interest in diving when you got here. I asked about wrecks, hoping there might be some WWII sites. They only knew of one, supposedly an airplane though they said they only had an approximate position. Oscar said it was too deep for the islanders that you needed a "bottle". It sounds like no one has ever dived on it. It is on the eastern reef probably south of Amik - Oscar pointed in that direction from Longan. An elderly woman named Francesca was certain of its location per her father's advice. She was sitting next to us during the conversation.

The other is an apparently unknown site of a ship that had something to do with a person known as "Queen Emma" who used to own operations in the Hermit Islands during the late 19 century. The ship, also named the Queen Emma, supposedly had a load of gold on board along with fleeing residents and was bombed by the Japanese as it tried to steam to the PNG "mainland" to evacuate residents during WWII. Details (obviously) were sketchy but we were told the wreck is in "deep water" somewhere north of Longan, probably in the pass between the Ninigo lagoon and the Pelleluhu lagoon to the north.

(Where you are going to want to dive anyway.) When I asked how deep the answer was "very deep". Pressed, I just got a shrug and an "I don't know". We would do some more research when we have internet or you may want to google to see what you find. Skimpy info to go on.

Another mention of a (WWII?) wreck was mentioned obliquely in a passage in the book "Living on the Edge of the Universe" about a young man who managed a coconut plantation in the Ninigos in early 1960s. Richard Bloomhead. We bought it on Amazon.com as an ebook. He passed over what he thought was a WWII airplane in a boat in shallow water near the island of Luf or Maron in the Hermit Islands. The book is a good read especially if you are coming here. Well written and interesting.

The person you will see about diving when you get here is Oscar, a really nice guy, who lives on Longan Island. (Leslie will be preparing all of the waypoints, including waypoints into Heina provided by SY Mugglerl who put buoys to mark the Heina pass, etc.) Oscar has no income and lives off the land and the sea. The diving fee to you would be asked to pay 10 kina a dive, about \$3.30. There is no charge for snorkeling. This was set by the provincial tourism folks and agreed upon by the community. I asked Oscar today if he got any of that money and he said no. He has to pass the money on to the chairman of the tourist board (I am not sure if it's Manus province or Ninigo). That's why you'll see entries in his book with \$ amounts paid - especially for the big boats like "True North. Please think about tipping him if you come here and use his services. He'll also give you veggies, take you sailing, he'll help you with boat chores and he'll take you into his big beautiful family. An all around fantastic individual.

Others may offer to guide you but please do not use anyone else as it may create dissension in the small community. Those who have offered are okay guys, nice guys in fact, but Oscar is the designated tourist contact, so he's the best one to guide you.

There are other visitor's books too; Rellen has one that was started at Heina and Michaela and John have one that Coquelicot started for them. We signed them all!

Heina's reef inside is also supposed to be amazing, but I think it's a snorkel.

**Tenaya – 2015:** Jim and I did the 60 miles to Ninigo Atoll as an overnighter to clear the outer reefs of each island group in daylight. No sooner has the anchor set than Thomas and several others zip up in a fiberglass boat with four drinking nuts to welcome us.

Joseph glides by in his sailing canoe and waves. Speaking softly and looking into our eyes, Thomas says that Mal Island is a safe place. The people may offer to give us things but we are not to perceive that as trading.

We are 150 miles north of the mainland. It is October, and we are the fourth yacht to visit this year – good thing they aren't looking for trading opportunities.

In the end we give our new friends clothes, sandals, a daypack, binoculars, fabric, sewing supplies and all the flour, rice and sugar aboard. We are headed to Palau, which enjoys free association with the United States, so will be able to restock.

A sailing canoe is called a 'wa' in the Seimat language of Ninigo. They are different than those in the Louisiades – these sails are rectangular, and the platforms are less intricately constructed but more finely finished.

Thomas says he is building a new one and invites us to watch while he puts the hull on the keel. We take hundreds of photos while asking nearly as many questions.

There are two kinds of coconut oil – fresh and overnight. Fresh is better as the coconut is scraped and cooked at once. In addition to cooking with it, coconut oil can be used to heal wounds. Molina and Paulyn teach me to make it: we squeeze milk out of handfuls of coconut shavings over a strainer into a big pot, the pot goes on the fire, the milk boils, and eventually oil forms. It boils until the clear oil separates from the 'poss' – poss can be used like butter and is a rich snack on its own.

**Miss Behave – 2014:** The things you could bring here to trade include bath towels, laundry soap (bars) and lots of writing pads and pens. They need ladies knee length shorts (utility type) and they all ask for tomato seeds, pumpkin, watermelon and epoxy resin for fixing their canoes. They still use sails. All the trees were cleared by the Germans so they rely upon drifting timber and rope to build their canoes. They are not begging and expect to trade food in exchange for goods. It has been years since I ate as many lobsters as I have in the past few days!

**Miss Behave – Aug 2014:** We are still in Ninigo trying to find some useful winds to head east but the gods are not being kind. The people here are wonderful. They are totally self-sufficient with one 30 metre coastal trader arriving a year so all and anything that they need is supplied by the few yachts that visit and what washes up on the beach.

We spent 6 days in Ninigo Atoll being entertained and fed huge quantities of lobster by the Longan Island residents. You really must try to get there if you can.

**Anui – August 2011:** We went to the Ninigo island group straight from Jayapura, sailing 225 miles North East. Red Boomer were already there and came out at dawn to guide us over the reef into the lagoon. The water was crystal clear and turquoise, but that was only the start of Ninigo's charms. We anchored off the island of Mal and were greeted a while later by a gentleman named Thomas and his son Richard, who brought us fresh coconuts and the offer of any assistance we might need. Over the coming days, we spent a great deal of time with Thomas and his family and through him were introduced to the rest of the island.

Mal was 'owned' by the Germans between the wars and was a coconut plantation. Coconuts still provide a source of income and food for the islanders and we ate many of them during our stay. When the Germans came to Mal, they bought the island with cigarettes from Thomas' grandfather – in the way that many powerful nations exploited indigenous peoples the world over. When the Germans left, the PNG government took ownership of Mal and its neighbouring islands, meaning that the traditional land-owners no longer legally own the land that has been theirs for generations. Ninigo is very isolated, only receiving supplies by boat 2-3 times a year. Their nearest town is Lorengau, some 200 nautical miles away. Only a handful of people in Ninigo have outboard motors, with most travelling between the islands by traditional sailing canoe. There is a primary school of 70 students, a clinic (well organised but low in supplies) and a Government station (an HF radio and satellite phone). Mal also has an airstrip, which is occasionally used to collect critically ill people or to bring in Government officials. The local language is Seimat and we enjoyed learning some polite phrases from the delightful Seimat-English dictionary lent to us by our new friends.

Mal is a series of small villages dotted along the length of the horse-shoe shaped island and linked by walking tracks. It has excellent reef, full of fish and crays, which locals will catch if



requested. The islanders have their own gardens where they grow papaya, oranges, pumpkins & bananas and community gardens of cassava and taro. Locals do not come to yachts to trade, being naturally reticent and unused to visiting boats but are very happy to trade any of their produce, as they are often without essential supplies such as rice, soap, sugar, flour, washing powder, fish hooks.

The Ninigo people are very resourceful and will try to maintain and repair what they have, but are often using tools and equipment that are beyond repair. They are badly in need of many self-reliance aids, especially tools, 12V batteries, navigational aids, copper/ brass screws and nails. During our visit, Scott, Bill and Ole worked with the locals on a range of broken items – the satellite dish and phone, inverters, solar panels, DVD players, the community lawnmower and a series of outboard motors. Most electrical items have been damaged by salt, insects and sheer old age, but there was some success with the satellite dish and the lawn-mower, not to mention a stream of outboard motors that appeared from other islands as news spread. Our boat was visited by canoes with well-wrapped TV's in them. We were only too glad to help. Scott and I took a class at the school, with me reading stories (which we left with the school) and Scott being asked to talk about education, environmental sustainability and global warming! Education is taken very seriously in Ninigo, with the islanders recognising that their children will need to have every advantage if they are to make their way in the world and contribute to their island home. The teachers at the school are from Ninigo and are deeply invested in their islands' future.

The people of Mal - especially Thomas and his extended family at Puhipi and Mollyna and Wesley at Piakahu - adopted us over the ten days we were there. They are people with strong values and a clear sense of community. Their children are happy, healthy and delightful company. We felt very much at home and in the last few days there was much talk of the merits of setting up a hut and going home, well, never really. Seth and Finn were in love with the various puppies they met and the idea of climbing trees for coconuts and playing soccer in the afternoons. I was drawn by the simplicity of the Ninigo life and the strong connections between people.

Normally we are cautious about inviting people back to the boat but this caution went out of the window in Ninigo. One Sunday, we invited two families to come to the boat for afternoon tea and had the honour of being visited by 40 people! Luckily we had all made plenty of cakes. The Anui water line was a bit low but we had a fantastic afternoon, with many jugs of cordial being made and much relaxed chat. We were given so much food in Ninigo – crayfish (eaten every day!), papayas and the sweetest pumpkins. The people have had very few yachts visit and so do not naturally ask for anything in return. We offered sugar, rice and soap and found these to be popular, though often we had to force our friends to take anything at all. There was a constant exchanging of gifts and food in thanks for favours and hospitality – on our last day Thomas' wife Elizabeth made me a basket, whilst Richard made Seth and Finn a toy sailing canoe (enthusiastically raced by the Ninigo children) and Thomas carved Seth a spear.

The school and community held a huge farewell party for us, with singing, canoe racing, speeches and a feast. It was an amazing day. We spent the next couple of afternoons with our new friends and there were tearful farewells on our last evening. The best place; the best people – never to be forgotten and hopefully one day revisited.

**Forza – April 2010:** We arrived in the afternoon and had decided to use the northern entrance, Longan Channel. As we approached the channel an open boat approached and it turned out to be the local headman/chief, Solomon, who offered to take us to the anchorage. The passage was relatively simple and we anchored to the south of Longan Island where the cruising guide suggests in 10m of water quite close to a concrete pier.

Our anchorage: 01-13.38 S / 144 17.87 E. Our C-map was accurate for the entry.

Solomon told us we were the first yacht to visit since Nov '09 and made us very welcome. His wife is called Leita and they gave us fresh veggies in return for exercise books and fish hooks etc. There is a well organized school in the village and well worth a visit. Solomon also has a visiting yacht log which we were asked to put in our comments and is well worth reading. If you have any kina (we didn't) I am sure you will be able to buy crayfish at a good price, he sells them to a wholesaler once a week for 12k a kilo. Solomon is also a guide to the local diving areas although he is not a diver and he is allowed to charge for this service under some regulations. Also we were told there was no diesel fuel available on the Islands.

We stayed for 3 nights and during this time the anchorage was calm and sheltered although we had quite a lot of rain which proved to be the norm for the next 2 months.

Our next stop was the Hermit Group so we departed through the South Channel as per the Guide. The passage through the lagoon was easy and in places very deep, the passage itself proved to be a little daunting as there is only one marker, a large steel girder painted white which you leave to stb'd on the way out, it is on the edge of a reef. From a pos'n of 01 21.96 144 15.09 we headed on a 180/190 deg course to sea, according to C-map this took us over a reef but we had nothing less than 6m under us. So while the C-map was good it is not perfect. Sounder and eyeballs are definitely required.

### **3.15.8 Wuvulu**

**Totem – January 2013:** The route from Ninigo to Vanimo, our next port of call, is a slightly awkward distance that can be stretched a few different ways for passage timing. We decided to build in a stopover at Wuvulu Island. Roughly halfway to Vanimo, we don't have a lot of information about the island except that it was one of Jean-Michel Couiseau's favorite diving spots, and the site of a failed resort he hoped to establish.

We slow motored into the south-facing bay, wondering if we'd find a place to drop the hook. It wasn't long before Wuvulu's version of the welcoming committee was paddling like crazy in our direction.

The dugout reaches Totem, and after a quick chat, we invite the crew on board. They say there's a spot where we can anchor off the other side of the bay, and pilot us across to find it.

Along the way, we learn about each other. The first question that Hari, the leader (or at least the guy with the best English) asks us is if we know Ben and Lucy. Ben and Lucy? It seems this German cruising couple visited Wuvulu. They were here... five years ago. No, we haven't met them! It seems Wuvulu doesn't get many visitors.

We answer the usual questions about where we're from, how long we've been traveling, what the children do about school. They tell us about the size of the island, their language, their crafts

and professions. Despite their somewhat intimidating outward appearance, it's a friendly bunch of guys.

The anchorage spot is an area just off the village where the fringing reef was dynamited to allow for boat access. It turns out to have just enough depth (we draw 6'), but not quite enough swing room for the two of us (we're in company with our friends on sv Sea Glass). We won't be able to stop overnight. As a consolation, we decide to just drift in the area off the anchorage. Jamie stays on board alternately drifting and motoring to stay in the area, while the children and I pull on our gear and jump in the water.

It is beyond spectacular. Among all the places we have been snorkeling- and there are some amazing spots- this easily ranks among the best. The fringing reef is only a few dozen meters, then drops nearly straight down. Totem's depth sounder measures up to the low 1,000 foot level, but just a few boat lengths from the wall we aren't able to sound the bottom. The clarity is stunning: looking down the wall, one peers through layers of reef life. Oh, to be here with scuba gear, a safe anchorage, and time! We count more turtles and sharks in 30 minutes than we've seen in almost three months. The size, variety, and sheer numbers of fish and corals are amazing.

Back on Totem, we trade for some beautiful (and terrifying) crafts. They're weapons, made from a hardwood called Gah which they say is grown on Wuvulu, adorned with sharp shark teeth and pointy bones in all the right places to really do damage. They're morbidly fascinating and I can't resist making a trade. John Robin is the carver, and proud of his work. We start trading for one, but John says we should have two. OK! One snorkeling mask and a bag each of rice (2kg), sugar (1kg), flour (1kg) and salt (500g), and a happy agreement is reached.

Asking the guys about the reef, we're told that the community restricts where spearfishing is allowed: because it is banned from this reef in front of the village, marine life thrives. We recall a similar experience in Vanuatu. When snorkeling in an area where the locals were restricted from fishing, we saw the largest examples of many species we'd seen across the Pacific. It seems like a simple practice to keep a healthy balance in the reef: why is it so hard to put in place? How much of the problem is education, and how much is limited resources? It's not something we can know from our perch.

Reluctantly, we leave Wuvulu behind for our overnight run to Vanimo. Cleaning up the cockpit, we realize John has left us a third carving- and left behind the mask we offered. Wuvulu is facing on the horizon, so we hope these were both intentional. Later conversations between cruising boats suggest some reputation for troubles on the island: the vicious looking weapons offer some contrast with the peaceful experience of swimming among creatures in a thriving reef, but perhaps some insight into facets of the island as well.

### **3.16 Far Offshore Islands**

#### **3.16.1 Nukumanu**

**Lorelei – November 2013:** We were on passage between the Solomon Islands to Kosrae in Micronesia when the wind died. We motored enough to make it to the remote Nukumanu Atoll at 3pm on day 4. With little wind about, we decided to pull into the atoll and wait until it picked back up again.

This atoll is 200nm north of the Solomon's and is so remote that there are no detailed charts. Fortunately Lisa had some Google Earth snapshots and we managed to use them and eyeball our way in through a pass and anchor up behind a small island on the western side. The view from the crow's nest was stunning.

That night we enjoyed a great sunset followed by a clear night with what seemed like a million stars and full view of The Milky Way.

The next morning Lisa walked outside naked to find a man in a canoe sitting off the side of Lorelei. After both initial shocks we find out Eddie is from the only inhabited island in Nukumanu Atoll which was over 10nm from where we were anchored. To our amazement we also find out we are in Papua New Guinean Territory!

He also said they only see a boat (aside from the supply barge) once every few years.

He recounted a funny story of the last boat that arrived over 2 years ago. They were a Swiss couple on a yacht and had a huge fight on board. He dumped her on the island and sailed off. She had to live with the villagers until the supply boat came and took her back to PNG.

Eddie was asking Lisa if she was staying and was a little disappointed when she said no.

That afternoon the wind kicked back in so it was off again, this time for the final 635nm leg to Kosrae.

## 4 North Coast of PNG

### 4.1 Milne Bay Area



**Wikipedia – 2016:** During World War II, the area was the site of the Battle of Milne Bay in 1942 and by late 1943 it became the major support base for the New Guinea campaign through the development of Finschhafen as an advanced base after that area was secured in the Huon Peninsula campaign. By January 1944 about 140 vessels were in harbor due to congestion at the facilities. Congestion was relieved by opening of a port at Finschhafen and extensive improvements at Milne Bay

**Pacific Wrecks – 2016:** During late August 1942, the Japanese attempted to land two groups Milne Bay. The first group departed Buna before arriving, RAAF P-40 Kittyhawks from 75 Squadron strafed their barges and stranded the troops on Goodenough. The second group departed New Ireland successfully landed Japanese Naval Special Landing Forces (SNLF, Marines) at three points inside Milne Bay during the night of August 25, 1942. This assault was the southern most point of the Japanese advance on land in World War II. By the end of August, the remaining Japanese withdrew, to fight on Guadalcanal.

Allied and Japanese missions against Milne Bay  
August 4, 1942 - August 9, 1943

After the battle, the area was then developed into a large Allied staging base. Several coastal villages were developed into military bases and naval installations after the battle. US Army base at Milne Bay was known as 'Base A'. By the middle of 1944 most naval installations were complete. Wrecks in Milne Bay:

**[A-29 Hudson Mark IIIA Serial Number A16-245](#)**

Ditched offshore Milne Bay

**[P-40E Kittyhawk Serial Number A29-110](#)**

Ditched on reef August 29, 1942, pontoon attempt failed, sunk

**[B-17F Flying Fortress Serial Number 41-24354](#)**

Pilot Webb MIA August 26, 1942

**[B-17E Flying Fortress Serial Number 41-2635](#)**

Pilot Hancock MIA November 1, 1942 discovered 1999

**[A6M2 Model 21 Zero Manufacture Number 646](#)**

Crashed August 1942

**WARNING:** In August 2018, Armed men attacked the Tawali Resort, located on the north side of the peninsula that forms the north edge of Milne Bay. They robbed the resort and the guests and took off in a high speed motor boat.

**4.1.1 Alotau (Alotoa) (Fuel, Internet, Groceries, Port of Entry)**

2XS reported wifi at the Alotau Waterfront Lodge (and none in the Louisiades) in 2016. Westward II reported a fuel dock here, but there was an explosion late Oct 2016, don't know status after that.

**Obiwan – September 2022 – Arriving from Townsville Australia:** Before leaving we made contact with Driftwood Resort. It is a boat-friendly resort with a wooden dock where sailing boat are welcome to tie. Marcus, the Australian boss of the resort arranged for the Customs, Immigration, and Health officers to come to the resort for clearing us in the country.

Alotau is not a very safe place to anchor, but at the resort they have security 24h and we could sleep without worries.

The restaurant was good, they also made laundry for us and managed to change our Australian dollars into kina. Everybody at the resort were really kind and helpful.

Driftwood Resort (10-18.676 S 150-25.369 E)

Marcus Scully [marcus@greychain.net](mailto:marcus@greychain.net)

All the officers were very kind and helpful. The boss of custom is a nice Lady called Sarah Mogi +67570048032. She gave us her telephone number and told us to call her if we had any problems.

At the end we paid 80 Kina for our clearance.

With Sarah we managed to clear in and out of the country at the same time. She simply asked us which date we wanted her to put on our clear out. So we could visit all the Luisiades and then sail north to Budi Budi and from there directly to Solomons Islands.

If you need a local guide in Alotau, we found a very helpful guy called Ken +67572523410, he looked after us all the period we spend in Alotau, arranged for us the renting a car to fill our fuel jugs with diesel and took us for a touristic tour till East Cape, on the end of Alotau peninsula.

Ken also suggested us our first anchorage after Alotau, that is where his family live.

**2XS – September 2016:** Anchored at 10-18.730S / 150-27.234E in 14m, dirty water

It is a small town, accessible only by plane or boat because it is surrounded by very (very!) steep mountains, shrouded in mist, and reaching down into the sea.

Nobody tried to to climb aboard; it is really quite restful.

This morning we filled up with fuel at the main wharf. This had its moments of stress... We had been told to get there early, 8am, if possible, and to go to the Transport Office to fill in forms. Pete did all of this but...he couldn't pay by visa. And when he went to several ATMs in the town centre none of them would disgorge money. So he had to come back to the boat to get my Visa card, which was more obliging. While he was gone the Transport Office man came and said Pete would have to go back to the office to fill in a new lot of forms because our timing was now incorrect – it was by then 9.30.

So...more forms...and more waiting for the actual fuel people to arrive. Which they did, in the fullness of time. Without a funnel or a correctly fitting hose. Pete shouted a bit and waved his arms around and bodgied up some sort of contraption so the fuel could be loaded into the thirsty tanks. The massed observers were very happy.

It is amazing weather. Every now and then there is a huge downpour, which stops as suddenly as it started. We hope our water tanks are filling as rapidly as they should. The local people are alarmed and annoyed with the weather. They say that it should be the dry season and that all of this rain is making their children sick. (Germy rain??)

Our first day in Alotau we were absolutely the only dimdims to be seen. (Dimdims = white people, in PNG.) And our second day – there were 1500 dimdims! A big P&O cruise ship came in for the day and disgorged cheery crowds of (mostly) Australians (mostly) from Cairns. Many of them hopped onto little buses and disappeared into the hills to see...no idea what they were seeing but it is all very spectacular, here, so I am sure the tours were great. But many hundreds of them didn't go on tours; they wandered up and down the main street.

I went up and down the street too, following Pete to Customs and Immigration. He was told that he would have to go to Quarantine before we would be allowed to check out. (Not quite sure why...Quarantine is for arrival not departure...but no point in arguing.) He had to go right back around the bay, past the Alotau Waterfront Lodge, where we are anchored, and along to the cruise ship terminal. So...I stopped off and went to sit in the big shady restaurant area where I

had a lovely time while Pete trudded back and forth from office to office. He also hunted around in some of the supermarkets and found – yes! – potatoes, and onions!

The day before we had been the only customers in the restaurant but yesterday some of the 1500 cruisers were in there, filling up all of the tables. There was a little band of local men, many of them very ancient, peacefully playing island music. I sat and battled with the WiFi and made lots of new friends.

**Alk – May 2016:** Alotau is a friendly town. Safe anchorage off Airways Hotel in 10° 18.61'S 150° 26.99'E. Secure dinghy landing on slipway of hotel. Immigration and Customs offices close by in Business Center opposite gate of Airways Hotel. Good supermarkets nearby. Good market for fresh produce. Diesel and water from hose at small wooden jetty of Cheong Enterprises in Sanderson Bay.

**Free Bird – November 2014:** We tied to the main wharf at Alotau for clearance, which they will want payment for. Immigration and Quarantine are right there on the wharf but Customs is up in the town. Do not wait for them to come to you, we got a corrupt, fat slob named Matthew who kept us waiting for hours then wanted overtime payments. Being my first foreign clearance I followed the instructions from Customs and ignored the suggestions from Immigration and Quarantine that I get in a taxi and go there. Live and learn.

As you leave the wharf and pass a small bay crowded with local boats and large building that houses a market and terminus to starboard and anchor in front of the Alotau International Hotel. It's 20+ mts from memory and the holding isn't good but it's the only spot. The wharf manager told us definitely to NOT go past there and we met a Canadian boat that had anchored further west in front of the village and be robbed at gunpoint.

A much better spot in all respects is Waga Waga right across Milne Bay from Alotau. Anchor around 10-24.4 S / 150-24.6 E.

**Yawana – 2014:** I cleared in and out at Alotou. Customs and quarantine are efficient and strait forward. A yacht was boarded & robbed late last year (this information is already on noonsite).

Alotou town is not a good anchorage due to being exposed to the east, south and west winds, and is a very deep harbour shoaling sharply near the Airways International Hotel. Anchoring in a remote location is unadvisable due to security. Driftwood Resort is to the west of the town centre and have a mooring and jetty for tenders. I anchored in Discovery Bay, Wagga Wagga village, on the south side of Milne Bay and caught a banana boat across to clear in. Customs and quarantine had no problem with this. Wagga Wagga village is very friendly, people welcome yachts, it is very protected from all but the NW winds. A policeman lives on Bismarck point so I anchored near his house and introduced myself to him.

Excellent anchorages can also be found among the Killerton Islands about ten miles east of Alotou. The road from East Cape to Alotou runs along the coast here and local PMV buses can take you into town for clearing in and out and shopping etc. I suggest anchoring in front of a village and getting friendly with a few people. Talk with a village elder if you are unsure about security.

Songlines – 2011: Clearance: Felix Dosi PNG Customs at Samarai Mobile: 73373405 Eric Awamaki 6410181/6410284 Manager - PNG Customs Services Alotau email: [awamakie@CUSTOMS.GOV.PG](mailto:awamakie@CUSTOMS.GOV.PG)

Being unable to get Felix by phone we organised our clearance through the Alotau office and when we arrived in Samarai, Felix had received the clearance papers for us as he goes into Alotau once or twice a week to check his email.

**Anchoring** in Sanderson Bay as recommended in the Cruising Guide is not viable due to strings of coastal trading vessels tied fore and aft in lines reaching from the middle of the bay to the shore. The cargo dock is also frequently used. We anchored off Airways Wharf in 25m and a slight swell. Both locals and expats mentioned security for yachts and tenders was an issue so I drove Phil ashore in the tender and he walked around town whilst I stayed on board for security.

**Fuel:** Cheong's Jetty, Alotau has 2-2.5m water at low tide and the southern side of the jetty can be accessed most days. Beware the reef extending out off the northern side of the jetty. The fuel hose reaches to the end of the jetty and fuel is about the same price as Australia. The manager is Edward 6411052 - he offered us the jetty as a possible place to tie up at night. There is security there and it may be an alternative for a quick shop in town.

**Internet:** We used the internet at the Driftwood Hotel, Swinger Bay, King Point (in between Rabe and Alotau) where they phone through to the local internet provider for a voucher. It's a pleasant place to sit on the deck and have a drink whilst you use the internet service. It's a short run in the tender from Rabe and you can use their dock; or a few dollars in a taxi. In calm weather you could probably anchor off the small resort.

**Rabe:** as an alternative to Alotau, Stringer Bay, Rabe is 2.5NM further down the coast and an Australian couple have kept their yacht in the bay for years, though they are soon to leave. The families on the waterfront there can be approached for boat security. We anchored in 10m off the end of the jetty. There was a slight swell. It's only a few kilometres into Alotau and taxis are cheap.

**Chasse Spleen – June 2009:** The 250 nautical miles crossing from Budi-Budi to Alotau proves enjoyable, mainly sailing in a nice breeze and despite the tricky navigation around constellations of reefs poorly chartered.

The formalities in Alotau prove complex with quarantine giving us a bit of a headache. However we find a lovely anchorage sheltered from the tradewinds only 5 Nm across the bay. Waga Waga is a small bay at the step of high mountains covered with a very lush rain forest and giant trees. A small beach is at swimming distance and the locals will prove extremely friendly.

Just anchored in front of this village, we are attracted by some festive preparations onshore under a gigantic tree (music, traditional dance, kaikai and a very big pig). We decide to join in and are informed that "big men from Moresby" are expected including the PNG Vice President and the Province Governor (an ex French Speaking Swiss). We are happy spectators of the show and honoured to be invited to share the lunch and meet the officials.

We are meeting Pastor Fred and his wife Rebecca (Pastor of the Pentecost congregation) who organised a delicious dinner for us. It is a difficult task for him to juggle with both the Christian faith and the inhabitants' belief in witchcraft. Traditions, customs are very present in the area. Fred and Rebecca will prove as keen to hear about our dimdim (white people) way of life as we are to hear about stories and myths of Milne Bay.



Our regular commuting to Alotau with the daily dinghy taking the villagers to the market place and our attendance at the Pentecost church, make us very popular with the locals. We feel very quickly accepted by the community.

Milne Bay was the scene of a major battle between the Japanese and the British during WWII. The forest but also the sea is full of wrecks and one can still see many relics of war machines.

**Maranatha – Feb 2009:** Anchorage Position: 10° 18.533S 150° 27.035E

Anchor in about 6 to 9 metres on a reef that extends out from the which is in line with the left hand side edge of the fuel tanks. Beware that the mud to the west of this position is very fine and NOT good holding. Further south the water starts to get too deep.

Generally speaking, Alotau is a lousy anchorage.

#### **4.1.2 Rabe**

**Songlines – August 2011:** We are anchored off the jetty at Rabe. Military history buffs will recall that Rabe was a central location in the Battle of Milne Bay in August 1942. It was the original proposed landing site of the Japanese Marines, and saw some fierce fighting. The famous photograph of an abandoned Japanese light tank: the photograph which came to symbolise the Milne Bay campaign, was taken at Rabe.

Rusted equipment can still be found in the jungle nearby, and we were warned to be careful when anchoring as wrecks dating from that time still litter the sea floor.

At Rabe we met fellow yachties Frank and Leslie. They were living on a ketch they built themselves thirty years ago. They had spent almost their entire working lives in PNG, and were about to return with their yacht to retirement in Australia. They provided yet another source of knowledge and opinion on modern PNG.

#### **4.1.3 Waga Waga**

**Free Bird – December 2014:** A much better spot than Alotau in all respects is Waga Waga right across Milne Bay from Alotau. Anchor around 10-24.4 S / 150-24.6 E. We spent a week here and liked it a lot. A beautiful place with nice people. Men may offer to be your guide to the area, we used a bloke called Russel Harry who was helpful, honest and reliable but he is not the only one. There is/was an Aussie expat and local identity called Ian Poole living here who is interesting and worth meeting. One boat we met had gone straight here and taken the local launch over to Alotau for clearance.

Songlines – 2011: Discovery Bay: Waga Waga village. This is a delightful, reasonably protected anchorage on the coast 6NM across Milne Bay opposite Alotau. We stayed for a week. There is an unmarked yacht on the bottom at: 10 24.516'S:150 24.465'E The wreck Muscoota is also a reasonable dive in the bay and there's plenty of room to anchor. Ashore everyone is helpful and security good. The Tree Tops locally owned and run guest lodge is up the hill.

**Maranatha – Oct 2007:** Anchorage Waypoint: 10° 24.518S 150° 24.487E

This is a very secure and quiet anchorage in eleven metres of water six miles south across Milne Bay from Alotau.

#### **4.1.4 Kana Kopi Bay**

**Free Bird – December 2014:** Kana Kopi Bay at 10-29 S / 150-39 E is another great place we liked a lot. The family that lives here are very helpful and are genuinely nice people. They have a visitors book for yachts to sign and will hint at a donation. Levi (pronounced Levee) and his wife Gertrude were custodians of the book when we were there but I gather his brother also has this responsibility at times.

The Killerton Islands to the north are interesting for a couple of days. There are the over grown ruins of a Kwato church in the bush here. Ask for directions.

Songlines – 2011: Kana Kopi Bay: An excellent anchorage between the China Straits and Alotau. We anchored at: 10 28.88'S:150 39.17'E in about 12m.

**Maranatha – June 2007:** Anchorage Waypoint: 10° 28.918S; 150° 39.170E

A quiet anchorage just around the corner in Milne Bay at the north end of the China Strait. Anchor in about twelve metres of water.

#### **4.1.5 Samurai Island**

**Aluna – Early 2018:** We chose Samarai as our check in port coming from Brisbane because it was the southernmost point of entry to Papua New Guinea closest to Australia without having to enter into a major city which we try to avoid whenever possible. The most common entries are Port Moresby and Alotau but we had heard many safety concerns about PM and didn't want to put ourselves in any danger. Alotau, on the other hand, would've made a difficult sail as with the strong currents and wind shadow from the main land we would've been likely stuck in the bay and had to motor our way all the way out. Being neither were ideal situations we gladly opted for Samarai.

History: What further attracted us to the island other than the convenience, remoteness and avoidance of dangers associated with cities is the history. It was formerly a major trading post between Australia and East Asia, the second largest after Port Moresby which is rather impressive considering it is only 0.11 sq mi. After WWII it greatly fell into disrepair and was eventually declared a National Historical Heritage Island by PNG govt. in 2006. When you arrive you will instantly feel the history speaking through the run-down buildings and rubbles but the people here will gladly share their stories to paint an even better picture.

Our anchorage: 10° 36.636' S, 150° 39.621' E, sand and coral 5.5–11m

Alternative: 10° 36.464' S, 150° 39.722' E with depths from 5-13m

We anchored right next to the jetty and just outside of the coral reef. We dropped anchor on a sandy patch right next to a bommie roughly 7 meters deep. The anchor ultimately wedged itself between two rocks and gave us ultimate hold. Watch out for swinging into the coral as the reef is rather shallow. It's also rather close and the currents get very strong (2-3 knots) twice a day when the tides change which could pull up a poorly set anchor.

There is a dedicated anchorage area though, which is at 10° 36.464' S, 150° 39.722' E with depths from 5-13m. It's a bit of a paddle from shore and not as sheltered but less hazards to be concerned with should you drag at all or have any other issues but do be cautious of the green marker nearby.

**Getting Ashore:** Be very careful as there is no pathway to the mainland cleared when bringing the dingy ashore and during low tide it gets very shallow so you will have to wait for the tide to come in to return to your boat or risk doing damage to the fragile reef. The beach is very appealing but we suggest you tie to either of the piers. They are often filled with other boats but if you ask politely you can tie off to one of them or they will move to make room for you.

**Visa on Arrival:** Samarai, does not offer visa on arrival as they don't have an immigration office. In order to avoid a hassle at this port of arrival, we recommend getting a visa before entering PNG or you will be sent to Alotau to obtain a 30 day Visa on arrival.

**Yachtperson Visa:** A 60 day 'Yachtperson' visa is available at your local consulate free of charge and should be processed and ready within five working days. We obtained ours in Brisbane's office located at 344 Queens St. Level 3 Brisbane, QLD.

**Renewal:** The only way to renew your Visa (without leaving the country) beyond the 2 month period is to visit Port Moresby or mail your passports to The Chief Migration Officer, Immigration and Citizenship Service Authority, PO Box 1790 BOROKE, NCD. Papua New Guinea (recommended to use an agent) in which you can get a one time 30 day extension. The process needs to be started at least a week before your Visa expires or it won't go through and there are some fees involved which vary from source to source but were not all that cheap (In excess of \$100 US/per person). Three months is the maximum time allowed under a Tourist Visa.

**Clearing In:** Check in is easy, you have to see Felix who does the customs clearance and also stamps passports with pre arrival visa. If he doesn't come to your boat after roughly 1-2 days just go ashore. People will happily bring you there or show you where to go. He does not have a boat so will ask you to ferry him back and forth for inspection of the vessel on arrival, and once again before you leave to give you your clearance papers to the next port you are aiming for. This is also why it's better to seek him out than wait for him, but if you desire a little rest after passage, like we did, then you might be able to relax at anchor for a few days before having to worry about it as the island seems to be in no rush. As soon as you go ashore though you will most likely be taken directly to him as the locals assume that is the only reason you would be there.

**Quarantine (in Alotau):** Unfortunately, we were not informed that we could not clear quarantine at Samarai, but Felix was very helpful and sent us to nearby Alotau (1.5 hour banana boat ride costing 70 Kina pp return) to see Customs and Quarantine.

At Customs we only had to mention that we've seen Felix and if any doubt they could phone him for verification. Here we received our clearance papers, the first being for ship quarantine clearance stating we had no foreign plants, animals, weapons, drugs etc. which cost 50 Kina. Usually they would require the boat to be in port for to do a visual inspection but Felix was kind enough to do one whilst clearing us in and gave them the ok.

Additionally, there was health quarantine clearance where they verified that we were healthy, hadn't recently visited any countries with yellow fever etc. and not bringing any diseases into their country which was an additional 50 Kina. Honestly we were both in pretty rough shape from not sleeping in two weeks and getting beat up at sea but we still passed! All in all the process was rather painless aside from having to wait for someone from Health Quarantine to arrive as they were on call and therefore had to be phoned to come in, but in that time they gave

us some stools to sit on and even filled out most of the paperwork for us. Hopefully you have as much luck as we did.

**Money:** There are no banks on the island and shops do not accept foreign credit/debit cards. You can take a water taxi to Alotau for \$35 Kina/per person each way to get to a bank that will accept foreign cards. \*See Alotau guide for further information.

**Fuel:** There are no refuel stations on the island. You can pay someone driving the local water taxis to get fuel from Alotau or take the ride yourself where you can fill up just off the pier as you arrive in the city.

When you ask for fuel they will automatically try to sell you "Zoom" which is pre blended oil in gas for two stroke engines as that's what the majority of engines run on in PNG. Be sure to specify what you want or you might get the wrong thing. If you are planning to visit the smaller islands and stay away from the cities then we highly suggest you stock up on fuel before you arrive, as you will only find 2 stroke zoom on the islands and often it is out of stock which can take weeks to arrive from the mainland.

Winds are fickle and anchorage can be quite sensitive with the fringing reefs and other hazards so you don't want to get stuck not having the motor as an available option to get you out of danger.

**Food:** There is a local market located right next to the main fishing pier that is open every day except Sunday where the women sell fresh produce, fish, and baked goods. On Saturday it is extremely busy as women from many of the surrounding islands go there to sell their goods and so it brings even more traffic from the surrounding islands. There are a few small shops that sell the basics but very limited selection. If you have fishing gear, sugar, oil, pasta, clothing etc you can trade with the locals for fruits and veg. If you need a big resupply then head to Alotau where you can get everything easily in the supermarkets and they even accept foreign credit cards.

**Repairs:** We were fortunate enough for the Customs official to recommend a mechanic to us whom happened to be his neighbor. His name was Geley and he became one of our best friends in the area. Whilst parts are in very short supply if it just requires the knowledge and wrench time he can do it. He's also a boat builder who if given the materials can build or fix whatever you desire.

**To Do:** The reef in-between the two piers just off the anchorage is in quite amazing health as luckily the place does not get too many visitors. It's not a massive reef, the bulk of it sits right in between the two piers, but we easily spent hours amazed at the beautiful world that lay literally just a short swim from our anchorage. If there's only one thing you do here it should be appreciating the diversity of coral and fish in such a small area

Samarai is a very tiny island, if you take your time a stroll around the perimeter will still only take an hour at most. The locals will get to know you very quickly and are all extremely friendly and respectful. Some of the highlights are the ruins of what was left behind when everything moved to the main land. Empty buildings, crumbling jetties, the remains of cars and boats whilst sad in their abandonment are quite beautiful as nature takes over them. The island is full of history and if you want to know the stories of the crumbling remains you just need to find anyone of a respectable age and ask. They will gladly tell you all about what it was like before everything

moved to Alotau. Sometimes you might not even need ask and they'll get going. There's not much for entertainment on the island so sitting around and sharing stories is a favorite pastime.

Whilst we didn't take advantage of this as we were focused on making repairs and recovering from a long crossing the locals offered to give us tours of the neighboring islands providing transport via banana boat and offering to be our guide. Ebuma, Rogea, Kwato and Sariba are all just a short boat ride away. We had a kind visitor named Joseph who paddled an impressive distance all the way over from what he called Adventist Island but come to find out it is properly called Gesila Island which is just off the mainland. He wanted us to come and visit the church and offered to refill our waters from their tanks and get us mangoes to thank him for some food we gave him. Additionally, and most importantly he offered us a good spot to anchor on the north side of the island 10 35.145 'S 150 38.727 'E that's supposed to be rather sheltered and roughly 2m at low tide. We really wanted to pay him a visit as he was such a sweet fellow but repairs took longer than hoped and our Visa clocks were already ticking with a long distance to go and so much to see so we sadly ventured on without stopping.

If you want to experience luxury there is a Nuli Sapi Retreat on the neighboring island of Logea where they only offer four bungalows so chances are you will have the island to yourself. The major draw to this beautiful little spot is it is known to be a major manta ray breeding ground. They offer snorkeling trips to the grounds which unfortunately we didn't find out about until after we left the area. Other tours available are trips to skull caves, village tours, and bush walks.

Visit their website to learn more: [www.nulisapi.com](http://www.nulisapi.com)

Contacts: One person we recommend getting in touch with in the area is Liberty M. Betuel, who is in charge of the Jomard Turtle Conservation Project and Freedom In Nature Group. She is a great resource for community and conservation projects in the area just so long as she is not currently in the field with no reception.

**Safety:** We entered PNG with much reserve as we had heard such horror stories about the people and piracy but Samarai shook any fear of that away. People went out of their way to make sure we were safe and even took turns keeping watch on the boat for us to make sure our anchorage held and we did not get any unexpected visitors in the night. We didn't ask them to do this but sure enough no matter when either of us came on deck to make our nightly checks there was someone ashore with a torch asking if we were alright. We never felt pressured or threatened but rather quite the opposite, accepted and cared for. They were very kind to point out places we should visit and places we should avoid.

The surrounding islands all had good reputations but Alotau was known for having rascals and pickpockets. Being over an hour away by dinghy they said it was mostly safe as they generally don't come out this far but it is better to be safe than sorry and suggest locking up your belongings. The two most common stolen things are engines and solar panels so if you don't have security then we highly suggest putting some sort of locks on them.

Be extra careful on Saturdays as the big market brings many outsiders from surrounding islands which means they may not be as respectful as those who want to keep their island's good reputation. We had no issues but we were warned to take extra caution and therefore we'll pass along the message.

**Free Bird – December 2014:** At Samarai we anchored in front of the old wharf near 10°36.6/150°39.5 There is good snorkelling under the old wharf and a walk around the town is worthwhile, it must have been quite a nice place in its day.

We also anchored off the resort on Rogeia Is, which is visible to the S.W. of Samarai.

**Maranatha – June 2006:** Anchorage Waypoint: 10° 36.570S 150° 39.647E

Samarai was the original provincial capital for Milne Bay. However, since the administration was moved to Alotau the island infrastructure has deteriorated badly.

Customs can be cleared here although you may have to go looking for the officer (Felix in 2008) as he may be fishing. His work-load is not very heavy. Beware of strong tidal currents during spring tides.

#### **4.1.6 Doini Island**

**Free Bird – December 2014:** We stopped at Doini Island at 10-41 S / 150-42.7 E There is a resort on the northern part of the island which was friendly to yachts. A walk around the island on the worthwhile and there are burial caves to visit. There are manta rays to be seen off the northern point of Gona Bara Bara island just to the west of Doini at the end of a beautiful beach. Go ashore and ask a local for directions.

#### **4.1.7 Sideia Island**

**Obiwan – Sep 2022:** Our first stop after leaving Alotau was Oba Bay, Sidea Island. This is where our guide Ken's cousin lived, and where he recommended as a safe stop on our way from Alotau to the Louisiades.

Anchorage at 10° 37.607' S 150° 47.172' E Good hoding, sand with some coral.

On shore a little friendly village, they invited us for lunch. Ali, Ken's cousin, is very kind and welcoming.

#### **4.1.8 Basilaki Island**

**Free Bird – December 2014:** From Doini Island, we went through Fortesque Strait and stopped briefly in Hemoe Bay on Basilaki Is. Lots of food traded here and we went up a freshwater creek by dinghy to do laundry.

**Songlines – August 2011:** Hemoe Bay, Basiliki Island: The Navionics charts are out a few hundred metres here and the waypoint in DimDims and Dolphins inaccurate, but eyeball navigation is sufficient for the anchorage. We anchored at 10 35.67'S:150 59.96'E in 10m. We traded some sugar and rice for a mud crab last night and a local took us to the village in the next bay for a guide for the P38 wreck today.

The locals at Hemoe Bay are a delight. After a day they approached us wanting to sell us crabs, fish, vegetables, bananas - whatever they thought we would like. They weren't much interested in money - sugar, rice, tinned fish, onions,(!) clothes and fishing gear were popular. It soon became apparent that here, on an island thirty five miles from Alotau, and even closer to Samarai, poverty is dire.

They are lacking in the most basic articles - soap is now virtually unknown, cooking pots and kettles when they fail cannot easily be replaced - clay pots are again in use, clothing is threadbare, and the houses appear deficient of almost every basic amenity. There are several banana boats in the village (banana boats are open fibreglass boats about twenty feet long, generally powered by a 40hp outboard), but no working outboard motors. I saw one motor which looked somewhat new, but was in need of repairs - there was no way of getting it to Alotau. The island thus remains isolated with no way to move copra - their only saleable produce, to market. Using outsiders to transport copra to Alotau is simply not economic.

These people are not 'bus kanakas' - recently contacted pre literates. The older people mostly speak English and can read, and this village has had western contact for well in excess of a hundred years. They have great expectations for their children. The kids go to a school some miles down the coast. They travel down on Sunday afternoon by canoe and return on Friday after school. They spend their weekends getting their food together from the gardens for the coming week, and in church for a good part of Sunday. Yet for all that they remain positive and optimistic. They are aware that education is a way into our world, though they must know that only a small minority will make it. They are acutely aware that their material circumstances have deteriorated in the period since Independence. One old pidgin speaking chap was unequivocal - 'ol bikpela man bilong gavman oli stealem pinis moni bilong gavman.' All the important people in Government have stolen all the Government's money. Destitute they might be, but they are no fools.

Hemoe Bay is spectacular. The principal attraction is the extraordinary anchorage, but we went exploring and found an absolute catalogue of features which we thought were worth mentioning.

**Diving:** Besides the P-38, there are a range of nearby dives which are listed in Bob Halstead's book, "The Dive Sites Of Papua New Guinea." We didn't dive them because of the conditions, but Bob's recommendations are generally spot on. The snorkelling is great on the fringing shoals to the north of the bay - fish are abundant and the coral was interesting.

As we approached Basilaki Island on Friday the conditions were perfect for a dive. We anchored Songline on a sandy patch in 5m on the southeastern reef next to Grant Island at 10 33.192'S:151 03.010'E. We hopped in the water at about 10 33.198'S:151 03.111'E. There is a great drop off curving away to the north but unfortunately the current was quite strong so we didn't spend much time on the drop off. However, there was a plethora of fish! Most of our time was spent over the reef top in 5-10m where there was less current. The water was crystal clear with a big variety of coral and fish to keep us amused. We towed the tender with us on a line. It's not ideal but we drifted with the current across the reef and were glad to get a ride back to Songline. A nice dive for photographers. I always wear a glove on my left hand to be able to hang on to something to try and hold still for a shot. This place is a divers' paradise but it's a challenge to find dive sites suitable for two divers alone with strong currents in so many places - and we're very risk adverse.

**Crocs and Mud Crabs:** Mangroves line a good part of the bay, and they appear to team with mud crabs. We had several - each was a meal for the two of us. Interestingly the locals don't seem to eat them, though they were aware of the trading value to us. They were delighted to exchange a monster crab for sugar and rice.

The mangroves are also home for a number of crocodiles - maybe that's why they don't go much for mud-crabs. When I expressed an interest in seeing crocodiles we were squired up a

tidal creek which empties into the bay. About three hundred metres from the mouth two crocs were taking their leisure on a mud bank: they nonchalantly lumbered into the water on our approach. The bigger one was no junior burger: we estimate he (or she) was eight to nine feet in length. That was quite extraordinary. What was more extraordinary was the nonchalance with which the crocs were treated. We were accompanied by a team of local kids in their flimsy outrigger canoes featuring centimetres of freeboard. When the creek got too shallow we waded along towing the canoes and our tender. Everybody was very relaxed and not at all concerned about being dinosaur bait - except (of course) for Kris and I.

A footpath runs beside the creek. It leads right past the mud bank of interest to a point on the creek above the tidal reach where the water is fresh, and where everybody swims and washes their clothes. My thoughts turned to the WPH&S issues as they pertain to the local washer persons. My concerns it appears are unfounded. The plan as it was explained to us is that when one of the crocs starts to take an unreasonable level of interest in the passing traffic, it is trapped and eaten. It sounds a fine plan, but with a possible flaw and a question left hanging: does the person assessing levels of crocodile unreasonableness hold the prerequisite qualifications, and is any person involved in an 'unreasonable' event entitled to counselling?

#### **Maranatha – 2007 - HEMOE BAY (Basilaki Island):**

Anchorage Waypoint: 10° 35.701S 151° 09.931E

Approach Waypoint: 10° 35.205S 151° 00.068E

*Ed Note: The waypoints given plotted 10 miles apart. The anchorage waypoint looks out of place. The approach waypoint looks good. The anchorage looks like it must be near 10 35.5398 S / 150 59.8826 E*

A calm anchorage in 10 metres of water in good holding mud. Locals have been known to steal outboards, ropes and other things off yachts anchored there during the night. Just be careful.

**SSCA Bulletin – 1992:** UJames Bay~ at the extreme SE corner of Basilaki Is. is a pretty spot, and it is only a daysail away from Samarai. The very best anchorage is behind Haines Island near a broken-down dock in 42 feet of sand. The rest of the bay is full of mangroves.

The people of the two villages there are very friendly and unused to yachts.

**Ondine – 1988:** Alan Lucas' Guide is completely wrong and does not mention a dangerous coral head right on the way to the far end of the bay.

#### **4.1.9 Nuakata Island**

**Free Bird – December 2014:** From the Engineer Group, we went to Gudi Bay on Nuakata Is. We first stopped at 10-16.1 S / 151-01 E and then moved to the small bay to the west at 10-16 S / 151-00 E. There was decent snorkelling here with a small, basic resort run by a nice local family and some walking trails ashore.



## **4.2 Between Milne Bay and Lae**

**Alk – May 2016:** The grey area in CMap charts directly N of Cape Nelson indicating unsurveyed seas, is navigable for a sailing yacht but it is strongly recommended to use Google Earth maps which indicate the submerged reefs well. Most of the reefs in this area are 5m or more below chart datum. Alternatively one can stay in the shipping lanes which have been surveyed.

### **4.2.1 Boiaboawaga Island**

**Alk – May 2016:** Is an island just off East Cape with good anchorage in sand/coral boulders 5-7m in 10°12.41'S 150°54.34'E

Several good dive sites nearby. Check with Tawali Resort.

### **4.2.2 Tawali Resort**

**WARNING:** In August 2018, Armed men attacked the Tawali Resort, located on the north side of the peninsula that forms the north edge of Milne Bay. They robbed the resort and the guests and took off in a high speed motor boat.

**Alk – May 2016:** Tawali is a dive resort with a wooden jetty where a yacht can tie up alongside in 10° 15.997'S 150° 46.61'E. Resort has laid FAD in 10° 15.8644' S, 150° 46.4499' E to keep fishermen out of house reef. Various excursion possibilities. Watch Bird of Paradise or Skul caves. Although a dive resort for Milne Bay, none of the dive sites are actually in Milne Bay.

### **4.2.3 Ipotito Island**

**Alk – May 2016:** Ipotito Island off Cape Vogel has good but deep (35m) anchorage in 9° 37.73'S 150° 01.21'E

Beautiful uninhabited island. Good diving/snorkelling. WWII airplane wreck ('Black Jack' in 50m) nearby but guide required.

### **4.2.4 Tufi**

**WWII History:** The Tufi wharf was originally established by the Australian New Guinea Administration based at Tufi prior to WW2 and was expanded and began operations as an advance US navy PT Boat base in December 1942. Conducting operations as far north as the Huon Gulf harassing Japanese shipping supply lines for several months eventually notching up many successful missions. Soon after the front line became too distant and the base relocated to the Huon Gulf and the base resorted to being a rear support base for the allied forces.

**Soggy Paws – 2017:** People we met at Sangat in the Philippines went here by air. Raved about the diving and raved about the small village by the resort. <http://www.tufidive.com/>

**Alk – May 2016:** Beautiful well protected bay with dive resort.

An ex-employee of the resort, John Thomas plans to lay moorings for visiting sailing yachts. He can be contacted via email through the Tufi resort. Many good dive sites on the reefs outside of the bay.

#### 4.2.5 Dregerhafen / Dreger Haven

Alan Lucas – Pg 138

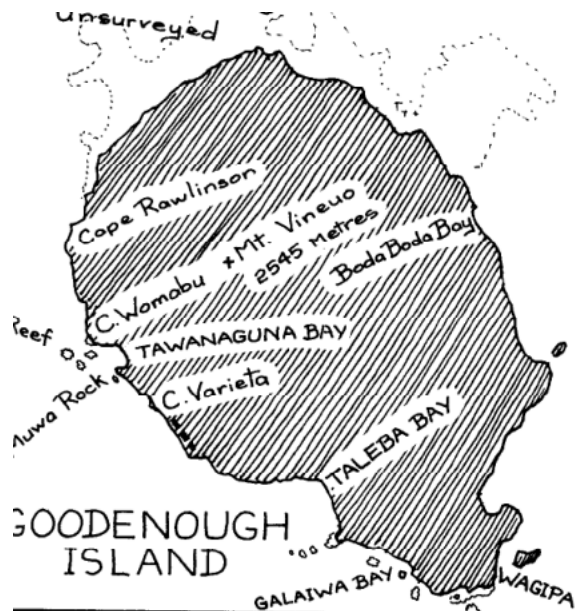
Not sure where this is, can't find on map, and no waypoint given.

**Alk – May 2016:** This is a very well protected anchorage in the small bay with famous Dreger Harbour High School with students from all over PNG who love to make contact with yachts. Unfortunately our 8HP outboard got stolen by a visiting banana boat when we did not lift it out of the water at night as we normally always do. There was no lock on the outboard. The school director Joe went out of his way to check for the outboard but most likely this was not stolen by locals. Otherwise a very nice and interesting visit. Small local supermarket in Gagidu some 5km.

#### 4.3 Near Eastern Islands

##### 4.3.1 Goodenough Island

Alan Lucas – Pg 121 – 1980:



#### CAUTION

Reefs off the south and west coast of Goodenough Island are accurately shown on updated charts, but a lookout should be maintained as a precaution.

**2XS – September 2016 – Mud Bay:** 09-28.804S / 150-19.996E

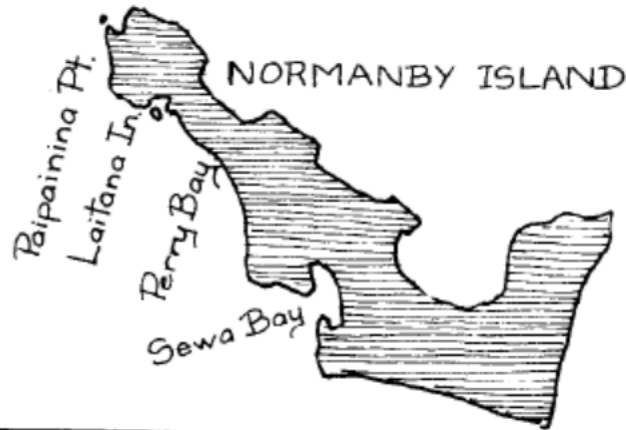
They were lovely, in Mud Bay. We kept them, so to speak, at bay... They clustered around in their canoes, gazing hopefully at the boat. Pete told them we had been besieged by thieves and that nobody was allowed on board. "But we are Christians here! They are VERY bad in the Trobriand Islands," they said. Nevertheless... while I was happily sitting on the steps reading books to the assembled masses bobbing around in their canoes, Pete found a man, standing in his canoe alongside 2XS, with his arm eagerly reaching into the kitchen... He very loudly threatened to cut this man's hand off, and some of my book club shouted, angrily, "You are spoiling everything for the rest of us!!" Indeed he was... I think my kiddiewinks would have liked to see Pete wielding a machete... but alas our cockpit machete has been nicked in the Trobriands.

#### 4.3.2 Fallows / Gallows Reef

**Free Bird – Jan 2015:** On the way to Normanby Is. we stopped at Fallows reef for snorkelling on some of the best coral seen in P.N.G. Dropped the hook on a small sandy patch about half way along the west side and hung back into deeper water.

#### 4.3.3 Normanby Island

**Alan Lucas – Pg 117 – 1980 – Sewa Bay, Perry Bay, Laitana Island, Paipainana Point.**



**Aluna – Early 2018 – Esa'ala:** Our Anchorage: 9° 44.165' S, 150° 49.218' E – Red House Marker on Chart, 7-11m

Pier Anchorage: 9° 74.191' S, 150° 82.190' E – Google Satellite Images – Does not match Navionics Charts

South Reef Anchorage: 9° 74.191' S, 150° 82.190' E – Google Satellite Images – Does not match Navionics Charts

**Chart Cautions:** Be aware there are additional reefs not on the charts and accurate depths are not provided as of 2018. We were told that the area was recently scanned and should be properly charted in Navionics by the year 2020. Both Pier and South Reef coordinates were obtained via Google Satellite images as they could not be well viewed on the charts. Please take note.

**Conditions:** Anchoring is difficult as it's right next to a reef in uncharted waters. At times with strong currents and winds it can get a bit choppy. If you feel unsafe about the anchorage speak to Patricia in the tourist office, she'll find someone to show you the best place to drop.

**Recommendations:** There are two locations they recommend but both require having reverse and tying to shore as they are in tight areas with not enough room to swing. We do not have that luxury so we stayed outside the reefs. The first of which is just next to the pier in-between where the dingys launch and a large fishing vessel sits anchored that appears to be there permanently. You could likely tie up to this boat or the pier but they are high traffic areas and you won't have much privacy. The second is at the opening of the reef to the mainland on the Southern end of the reef, marked with the blue pin on the chart. This is where we were suggested to go as it was much more sheltered but we had already previously attempted and found it not wide enough to

swing being so tight to the reefs on either side and therefore chose our later location outside the reefs.

**Getting Ashore:** This greatly depends on where you decide to anchor, should you choose either of the points that require tying to shore then surely you obviously have not much of a paddle.

Should you anchor outside the reef where we were located there is a small opening in the reef marked by poles sticking out of the water on either end of the opening. Paddle through that then navigate your way towards shore. There is an area just in front of a tin shed where the locals pull up their dingys to the beach and you can do the same. There was a nice tree conveniently located there we likely tying our canoe up to. From there it's only a short walk to the pier, then into town.

Esa'ala is a gateway to far more than we ever would've imagined in this tiny village. We originally only wanted to make a quick stop to explore on our way to Dei Dei hot springs but fell in love with the area and were more than happy we had made the detour. Despite being an area that in 2017 only received 30 outside visitors and we were the first guests of 2018, they had an impressively well organized tourism department. As soon as you come ashore you arrive at a tourism village where the representatives live traditionally in huts to preserve the cultures of the island. From there you will be taken to their offices past the soccer fields where they will happily greet you and offer you literally anything you want that they can make happen. Tours to the mountains, bird watching, visiting surrounding islands or anything you can think of even as simple as refilling your water supply.

**Natural Beauty:** Besides just a lot to do the area is absolutely stunning, as you'll see in our pictures below it's a photographer's dream. Despite the fact we said there is tourism here this is anything but a tourist trap and the area remains very natural and almost untouched. The landscapes are breathtaking and the people are so happy to see you everywhere you go. What is there not to love about this place? We highly recommend a visit.

**Clearing In:** No need to clear in here as it is not a major port however always be ready with your papers. There was an immigration officer visiting the area who saw our boat and asked to see our clearances from Samarai and Alotau. He was there investigating recent drug smuggling concerns and Europeans are not excluded. This just happened to be an odd instance but it pays to be prepared.

**Money:** There are no banks or ATM located on the island however you may be able to get money from one of the shops on the main strip. We tried at most of them and had mixed success, some work some don't. Unfortunately, we did not make note of which did but if memory serves correctly we had best of luck with one place titled trading post, it was the central shop on the left hand side if you are walking up the street from the pier. You can only take out 100 Kina per day as they don't carry much cash on hand. Sadly the same issue goes with using credit/debit cards for payment. Most do not accept foreign cards despite what their signage says. Be sure to bring plenty of Kina with you to make any purchases.

**Fuel:** Only 2 stroke 'zoom' is sold here. It can be purchased at many of the small shops but the most reliable source, although slightly more expensive is right at the pier. Be cautious as they run out at times and must wait for shipment from the mainland which can take weeks.

**Markets:** There are two local markets, one large one that is open from early morning till noon located just before the strip of shops. The other is located along the pier and is often filled with vendors all day long. The wonderful thing is that there seemed to be something different every day. The women bring pots full of cooked and seasoned saygo, coconut, potatoes, plantain, greens, fish and other delights which can take the efforts out of making dinner. They'll also bring large Tupperware containers full of donuts, bolbol, and whatever other fried sugary treats you probably shouldn't but totally will love eating. Of course uncooked fruits and veg are available as well.

**Shops:** The strip of shops offers a limited variety of canned and packaged foods but not a great variety as it all must come from the mainland. Rice, noodles, tuna, oil and soda are the common finds but don't plan on a full resupply here beyond the basics.

**Repairs:** Everyone is helpful in attempting to locate parts and some will offer to send a brother, cousin, uncle etc. to the mainland and try to find what you need but supplies are scarce in this area so please plan accordingly.

**Bird Watching:** There are a number of options available depending on how early or how late you want to be out and how far you are willing and able to hike but the main attraction in this area is the Goldie's Bird of Paradise. There are other birds of paradise in the region as well that tours can be arranged to see but that's the one we were after. You can find amazing footage of Goldies from where we trekked in the BBC documentary South Pacific, narrated by Benedict Cumberbatch

**Skull Caves:** Part of the movie Sanctum was filmed in these famous caves as if you need any further reason to go visit them... or not to.

**Hiking:** There are treks to waterfalls, hot springs or even just long jungle walks. Whatever you want they will make it happen.

**Snorkeling:** The large reef in front of the bay is ideal for snorkeling with a variety of different habitats thanks to the thermoclines from underwater vents pushing out hot water into the otherwise surprisingly cold waters. Sand patches, sea grass beds, small bommies, and large walls of coral can all be found here for a good variety of wildlife to be seen.

**Tour Offices:** Contact Patricia at [sinyoipatricia@gmail.com](mailto:sinyoipatricia@gmail.com) , [Easalatours.png@gmail.com](mailto:Easalatours.png@gmail.com) or find them on Facebook: Tourism Esa'ala for further details on tours available.

**Conservation Projects:** Currently the tourism board leads a weekly beach cleanup every Friday starting at the pier which you are more than welcome to join. Only a few years prior they had a massive waste issue and just talking about the need to cleanup wasn't enough. Once the locals saw their own representatives taking their time to collect trash and saw the improvement it was making did the attitude change and now people are collecting their waste rather than throwing it in the sea. They have also created a landfill to reduce the amount of burning plastics and waste in the area.

**Safety:** This is a place where everyone goes out of their way to make you feel welcomed and we felt safe as can be. One story sticks out in our minds that really paints a picture of how we can get so caught up in fear. A small child paddled over to the boat singing like an angel and asked if she could come on board. Of course we couldn't say no to such a cute little girl with a

beautiful voice. She started telling us all about how much she loved singing and asking about the boat then she said the part we won't forget.

She told us that everyone on the island was afraid of us because we're different and she wanted to know for herself if we were anything to be afraid of. All too often we are afraid of things we don't know anything about but unless we make the effort to learn more about that thing we will never know why we are afraid. This little girl was brave and obviously we are nothing to be afraid of. We too shamefully arrive in places with our guards up and that is natural but the best thing you can do is not assume the worst in people. If you show them respect and positivity they have no reason to cause you harm. We had nothing but good experiences here and of course after she went back home we soon had many more visitors as they were no longer too shy. Take your average precautions but this is a very safe lovely place from our experience.

**Aluna – Early 2018 – Blakeley Island:** Anchorage: 10° 25.828' S, 151° 13.090' E, sand with the odd coral 0-5m.

**Caution:** Charts will not tell you what is reef and what are sand dunes so pay close attention when approaching but you can comfortably navigate your way to a safe place to drop as the water is rather clear and shallow so long as conditions aren't poor.

This island is only inhabited 6 months per year during Sea cucumber fishing season which is May – October. Should you come off season, you will have paradise all to yourself with accommodations already built. There is actually very nice craftsmanship on the huts and beautiful landscaping which we wouldn't expect from a family of fishermen on a mission but we guess they had quite a lot of downtime between searching for sea cucumbers to make things look nice.

**Family Approval:** Should you come during May – October you will have to clear in with the father of the family. His children will show you to his hut where he will ask the usual where are you from/going, how long are you staying and then hopefully tell you that you are free to roam the island as he did for us.

**Beaching:** Sailing Cats could beach here. Keep a good lookout for reef but there are spots where you could go all the way to the beach.

**Getting Ashore:** If you arrive during fishing season you will likely get a welcoming committee by canoe and they will happily paddle you ashore otherwise as we mentioned with beautiful sandy beaches it shouldn't be a tough time getting to land safely and if you beach it then you're already there.

While the island appears rather tiny it can take a good amount of time to walk the perimeter. There are tons of tide pools to explore and great for shell collecting with Giant Clam shells and Cowrie quite abundant. We highly recommend wearing water shoes or sandals as there isn't a soft sandy beach all the way around and it requires some graceful walking over sharp rocks in parts.

**Safety:** With no one ashore but the small family from May – October and no truly nearby inhabited islands there aren't many threats to be concerned with. The family is very friendly and only seemed excited to have outside visitors, which is quite a rarity for them. They offered to watch over our boat while we explored the island and were nothing but accommodating, certainly nothing to fear.

**Free Bird – Jan 2015:** Went into Sewa Bay in Normanby Is. and anchored off the Saidowai Guest House run by Winston Fred. 09°58/150°57.5 While here Winston organised a trip to hike and see Goldies Bird of Paradise, which was an interesting day out.

The CMap charts in OpenCPN were very inaccurate in Sewa Bay but very accurate inside the reef up to Kiriwina oddly.

#### **4.3.4 Stratford Islands**

**SSCA Bulletin – 1992:** Stratford Islands, the lagoon seems to average about 3 feet deep right on out to the sheer cliff drop-off, where about 50 feet out we had no soundings ...checked out west and south sides and found no anchorage.

#### **4.3.5 Hastings Island**

**SSCA Bulletin – 1992:** Hastings has a very nice anchorage in crystal-clear water with 150 feet visibility in about 40 feet sand between coral patches. It is a spectacular island with 700-foot cliffs and caves. It is also another uplifted atoll (see chartlet).

### **4.4 Lae**

**Noonsite – December 2016:** Located on Papua New Guinea's northeast coast, opposite the island of New Britain, Lae is the second largest city in PNG but is still considered the 'Wild West' of the country.

Lae is a mining and transport hub and as such has an abundance of industries that can assist in yachting repairs and maintenance. The Lae Yacht Club is developing a haul out facility (via Hydraulic Trailer) planned for some time in 2017. Yachts can be lifted by crane – however, the cost is inhibiting.

Lae has been particularly affected by the recent surge in criminality in this part of PNG and it is inadvisable to wander the streets of Lae alone, even in crowded shopping areas.

Marina Entrance: 06° 44.36'S, 147° 00.48'E (marina entrance)

Port Clearance can be arranged by the Yacht Club.

Boarding Officers will come to the club weekdays from 8 am. Sometimes the officers will not have a vehicle, but the Club can arrange to pick them up.

Lae Customs: Tel: +675 472 4899

Docking: The marina here is a secure place to berth but it is best to use the transport offered by the marina when visiting places in the town. The staffs are reported to be very helpful and friendly.

<http://www.laeyachtclub.com.pg/>

<http://www.facebook.com/laeyachtclub/>

Minimum depth is 2.5 meters. We currently have 2 sailing boats moored at the marina, but mostly Power boats.

Yacht Club manager and staff will assist all cruisers with provisioning through the use of its van and driver for a small fee. All supermarkets, banks etc are very close to the Club, Good free internet in the restaurant and bar.

**Thyme – August 2013:** We sailed from Madang to Lae in August of this year (2013) where we were warmly welcomed by marina management and dock hands upon arrival and directed to a berth. The entry was easy, depths good and the marina is well protected by a break wall.

Lae is considered by many to be the wild west of PNG, but inside the protected marina grounds it is a small haven. They have a great bar and restaurant with regular events. The locals are friendly and the Game Fishing Club is extremely active attracting many boaties and fisherman at the weekend.

The boats and grounds are well maintained, there is a very good fuel dock and power and water to all berths. There is shower facilities and the ladies at the laundry are happy to help with washing for a small charge.

Although I wouldn't recommend walking the streets, the marina is more than happy to shuttle you to shops, banks and suppliers when they are making their daily rounds. Lae has some great grocery stores and a very cheap fresh food market.

Being the main supply port to the highlands, all major service suppliers seem to be available. Welding, diesel mechanics, paint suppliers, large hardwares, international couriers - Lae seems to have a lot to offer a sailor in need. The only haul out facilities though are Port Moresby, Rabaul and Madang.

The security companies run reasonable shuttles to and from the airport making it a potential stop for a crew change.

I did get restless staying there for a few weeks and the secure walking path along the breakwall came in handy. Salamoia, a nice island with good underwater attractions, nice beaches and a favourite weekend haunt with locals is also a nice escape. Locals will have some great advice for surrounding islands as well.

The overwhelming memory though is of the staff and manager. Nothing is a bother, they bend over backwards to make you welcome and look after you. They truly know the meaning of hospitality and really for this reason I can highly recommend a stop over at Lae Yacht Club for the weary sailor.

They respond promptly to email on [manager@laeyacht.org.pg](mailto:manager@laeyacht.org.pg) or phone on +675 472 4091 or +675 472 4909.

We've left our yacht Thyme there for a number of months now and are confident it is in good hands. Oh, by the way the rates are very reasonable!

[www.svthyme.blogspot.com](http://www.svthyme.blogspot.com)

#### **4.5 Madang**

**Aluna – Early 2018:** Mooring: 5° 12.466' S, 145° 48.518' E – Tied to large metal pipes above a reef – 2-5m



The mooring belongs to Madang Resort, so please check with Peter Barter beforehand. E-Mail [info@mtspng.com](mailto:info@mtspng.com)

**Supplies:** Huge local market with ALL the veggies and fruit, plenty of hardware stores, plenty of Chinese solar stores, Chinese owned supermarkets, Australian owned supermarket (Anderson's), Rooke's Marine (for boat parts and refilling LPG bottles))

**Thyme – June 2013:** We entered PNG from Jayapura, West Papua clearing in at Vanimo, a short 30 odd nm hop against the current. While it was a little bit of a wait onboard due to a large number of commercial vessels, it was friendly and uneventful.

From Vanimo, we headed offshore to enjoy the beautiful Ninigo Reefs and Hermit Islands. So much has been said about this area and we can only keep nodding our head in agreement – Fantastic! Amazing!

After dragging ourselves away from island hospitality, we sailed directly to Madang anchoring off the Madang Club on Christmas Eve. The Madang Club was very friendly offering assistance wherever possible. We found it to be safe and the club has recently held the National Fishing titles, a big success with many large boats attending. Their floating pontoon has been upgraded which smaller yachts could tie up to with permission. They have showers, toilets, fresh water, a good swap library, icy cold beer, a small bistro and is within easy walking distance of the market, supermarkets, and the local resort.

Madang is a very pretty area with numerous anchorages available in the large harbour which is safe all year round. It is also a clearance harbour with friendly officials. I also did my visa extension from here but you do need to send your passport to Port Moresby which carries risk. Outside the Madang Club can get a little rolly during the northerlies but there are plenty of options further in.

There is our yacht, Thyme, and another in the harbour and most Sunday's we have a day out followed by a race home affectionately referred to as the Madang Yacht Club Sunday races.

There is no shortage of places to explore on the water. The beautiful Sek Harbour has some amazing dive sites. My first dive off Pig Island I saw both a manta ray and a hammerhead. There is a lot of healthy coral and a feast of small critters for macro loves. Many World War II wrecks and others are also interesting. The offshore game fishing is great with many records broken this season. A visit to Karkar or Kranket can also be nice. Catching up with the friendly locals at the bar would soon see you armed with waypoints and information. There are also local tour operators that can help with seeing some of the amazing sites out of town. For eating out there are some nice resorts that do lunch and dinner – an afternoon overlooking the harbour by the swimming pool may be that much-needed treat.

Saying all this, there is a small element of troublemakers and with any travel in PNG, you must remain vigilant at all times. We always lock everything, we have sensor lights installed, we keep our eyes open to trouble and we do not walk around at night. Another point to note is women should be sensitive with their dress and short or skimpy attire could attract unwanted attention.

### Supply Essentials:

- a number of good grocery stores, albeit a little expensive compared to Aussie but well stocked including excellent quality meats
- Alcohol take-away sales are available from some supermarkets Mon-Thu only
- Town supply water readily available and good for drinking
- Large and friendly market for fresh food and fish
- 2 fuel docks
- 2 Slipways – a little out of price range but if in need...
- Cooking Gas, available but is very expensive
- Hardware stores carrying basic supplies
- Super cheap clothes at Kalibobo to stock up for the islands
- We use Digicel for phone and internet but the internet outside of the main cities is very slow and expensive. There is some internet available at the local resorts – again expensive.

**Stap Isi – 2009 (from Noonsite):** After living in Madang for nearly 20 years and cruising in and around Madang without incident for the past year, we would have said that this was one of the few places in PNG where one could cruise in relative safety. That changed on 16 July when we were boarded by three men and assaulted on our Yacht "Stap Isi" while anchored in Madang harbor.

I was sleeping in the cockpit and my wife Kathy was sleeping below when at about 1 AM I awoke to find someone pressing a machete against my neck and telling me to stay still. Our plan in case of such an incident is for me to try to keep the assailants busy while Kathy locks herself in the head and sounds the portable air horn. Our assumption is that the best defense in case of attack, especially in a populated area, is to make as much commotion and noise as possible.

I called for Kathy to sound the horn, unaware that someone was already below with her. When she tried to get up, he laid her forehead open with a club. By this time I was grappling with one man in the cockpit while another covered me with a homemade shotgun. I was able to wrench the machete away from my assailant but not before receiving blows to the head and arms that would later require stitches. Apparently the shotgun was not loaded because the third guy's contribution to the attack was simply to hold it and attempt to look menacing.

By this time Kathy, in spite of being dazed and blinded by the blood, had been able to get up, find the horn, and make her way to the head. She started blowing the horn and at that point the

assailants began going over the side. I was able to get one swipe with the machete at the guy who had hit me as he went over but unfortunately was not able to inflict much damage.

The last we saw of them they were pushing their canoe back out into the harbor. The next morning, after receiving medical care, we filled out the appropriate police reports but nothing is being done by the police. Their attitude seems to be that since we were not killed, what are we complaining about.

PNG is a wonderful place and we would still recommend it as a cruising destination, but with the warning that if one stays around long enough they will encounter security issues. For us, it took almost a year of cruising before it happened. But this is our home and we are going to continue to cruise here. We are definitely, however, going to rethink and upgrade our security arrangements. And we would encourage anyone who is thinking of cruising here to be very security conscious.

Given the results of our incident, I would say that the best response to such an attack is to make as much noise and commotion as possible. These people are relying on darkness and stealth. Light and noise tends to put them off.

#### **4.6 Wewak**

Wewak is the closest mainland town to the Ninigo Islands. The Ninigo Islanders mentioned making trips to Wewak for supplies.

Few cruising yachts stop here. It is well covered for ships in the US Sailing Directions Pub 164.

#### **4.7 Between Indonesia and Ninigo Islands**

##### **4.7.1 Einamul (03-08N / 142-24E)**

**Screensaver – May 2017:** Anchorage: 03 07.74 S / 142 23.62 E We anchored in 18m Sand, 2G Internet just. With the season transitioning from NW to SE monsoon the hope was that by coming down here (our last SE Leg) we could get a sailing line and reduce the current for the next leg. The wind, what little there was, sat at about 20 degrees apparent of the run line, and the current was now beginning to bite, so it was just as well we hadn't planned to go further SE. As it was we left just before daybreak and arrived just after sunset.

##### **4.7.2 Vanimu (Westernmost Port)**

###### **Unknown Boat – 2017? Contact info:**

Iman (works at Indonesian consulate in Vanimu) [vanimo.kri@kemlu.go.id](mailto:vanimo.kri@kemlu.go.id)

Indo consulate: Iman Persada 70012138, Office 4571372

Customs: David Mandui, [Manduid@customs.gov.pg](mailto:Manduid@customs.gov.pg)

Simon Soti Taxi: 71049868

Port Authority: Gibsen 73922535, Michael 73285725

Fuel: Alex 72821464

**Calamia – May 2018:** Checking out at Vanimo Papua New Guinea - a warning!

For cruising yachts intending to exit PNG at Vanimo, we would like to share with you our recent checkout experience there.

We entered PNG at Rabaul in May 2018 and were issued a 30 day Visa on Arrival by the Immigration Officer at Kokopo International Airport. Customs informed us of the need for point to point check in at each port visited and we were issued with the appropriate documentation.

On our arrival in Vanimo, we completed the customs check in as required. In light of the information sourced on Noonsite about security issues, we introduced ourselves to the police who were very helpful and keen to make our stay a safe one.

After 6 days of a pleasant, uneventful stay we contacted Mr. Stanly Gardiwilo, Immigration officer, to arrange a time to complete the formalities and what followed was a sad end to our visit.

We were subjected to verbal abuse of the worst kind, an extraordinary irrational tirade that included threats of extortion and seizure of our passports. Mr. Gardiwilo refused to discuss the matter with Immigration in Rabaul or Customs in Vanimo.

He refused to stamp our passports out because we had not come to see him on our arrival in Vanimo. (Immigration at Rabaul confirmed we were NOT required to visit immigration until exiting PNG).

We were told to 'come back next week' (after our visas had expired) and would then be fined in a court of law and could expect to be jailed! We would have been in a very precarious situation had it not been for the excellent work provided by the Australian High Commission in Port Moresby in liaising with relevant authorities on our behalf. We were also confined to our yacht while Mr. Gardiwilo gave consideration to our situation overnight.

Our passports were duly stamped the following morning and we left Vanimo. While not required, it would be prudent to visit Immigration if planning to stay in Vanimo to avoid the very unexpected situation we found ourselves in.

A formal complaint has been made to the relevant authorities in the hope that it will benefit cruising yacht community.

**Field Trip – September 2017:** If it wasn't for the fact that we needed visas for Indonesia and could only get them in Vanimo, we would have skipped this stop. Vanimo is not safe for overnight stays. Two vessels in 2017 were robbed at gunpoint, one being a large 60+ foot monohull that was robbed at night by multiple men.

If you plan accordingly, you can get your visa in the same day (you need to have cash, and paperwork filled out ahead of time if possible). You can email the embassy requesting details for the visa. As of this writing you did NOT need a sponsor letter for a tourist visa (180 days) in the Vanimo office.

Clearing out was simple, but you must make stops at immigration and customs. Both of which are in different locations and can take some time. The airport houses immigration and customs is a bit away. The immigration officers gave us a ride to customs. Very nice folks and easy, just time consuming.

**Screensaver – May 2017:** Anchor in 6m, Mud, 2G. Mostly motoring down the coast with some help from ENE winds. The current is now getting a bit stronger so it is just as well we don't have too much further to go south before we jump off shore.

We stopped at Vanimo to check into PNG. There has been a few bad reports about Vanimo so anchored in the corner where ships and harbour master could see us, for whatever that was worth. Woooo what a contrast to Jayapura though. While we only spent 2 nights, I didn't see anything to give me any great concern. For the first time in a long time though we did come across a number of broken beer bottles on the beach so one had to be pretty carefully with Mouse ( the tender) or would rip a whole in it, or our feet. At the time I did not realize that the broken bottles were a precursor to a bit of wider spread drinking problem, one I haven't seen till now in Asia.

**Immigration** was fairly short walk to the airport which is being expanded, and the local guys were extremely helpful and nice. They even drove us across the other side around the airport to customs leading us right to the door. Our Visa's we got in Jayapura were for 60 days and an extension is not all that cheap so we will see how we go. Customs were just as nice and drove us back to town, pointing out where the harbour master was in this shed on foreshore and it was all over in about 2 hours. A sharp contrast to Jayapura and the way it should be, although being driven around was much nicer than I expected.

The **ATM** had a queue of 40 plus people, perhaps being Friday this was payday, anyway I didn't bother standing in the queue. We had a little money we got from a money changer in Jayapura, and the less in our pocket the less we could spend. We picked up a couple of SIM cards at the super market, and the system here is much more simple. You either buy voice, data, or txt or combination of. So we paid 25 Kina for each SIM + 68 kina for 1.2GB of data for 30 days. For less than that I got unlimited data in Philippines, so PNG is expensive.

**Diesel** here is up around \$1.50au, whereas in Jayapura it is around 0.55 to 0.65au /L. So of course there are those running across the border to fill up which is no doubt one of the reasons we were told in Jayapura we can't buy fuel. Given we will do a fair amount of motoring around these latitudes I'm not looking forward to paying Ozy prices for diesel.

We didn't look too hard or at much in Vanimo it was really just a place to stop and check-in, but what we did see was more western products and much higher prices, than the other Asian countries I have been to. Generally pretty grubby, and no shortage of those chewing beetle nut.

**Adina – August 2015 – Checking Out at Vanaimo:** Vanimo is a small town on the western end of mainland Papua New Guinea. Adina was there on 31st August 2015 to obtain our visas for Indonesia and to check-out from Papua New Guinea. The town has had security issues in the past so you need to take care both on land and on board. We arrived early and completed formalities within the day and did not stay overnight.

**Anchoring:** The bay is large and shallow and reasonably well protected in SE trade winds. Initially we anchored at 02 41.028S 141 17.86E near the dock as we had been advised the dock has security. We then had to move to enable a cargo ship to moor stern to the dock. We moved to 02 41.048S 141 17.591E. Holding was good in both places in mud and plastic bags.

If staying the night the Harbour Master ([Levi.Langai@pngports.com.pg](mailto:Levi.Langai@pngports.com.pg)) advises yachts to anchor as close to the dock as possible. This area is well lit on shore and in his opinion the

safest position in the bay and in theory they have guards. If there is no ship, you can ask to actually tie to the dock which is at 02 40.993S 141 17.896E

One of us stayed on the boat and one of went ashore.

**Getting ashore:** We took the dinghy to the right of the dock (when approaching from sea) which the local banana boats use – 02 40.991S 141 17.948E. This gets very shallow at low tide (less than 30cm for at least 20m from shore) so be careful if you leave your dinghy unattended. There was nowhere obvious that we could have chained the dinghy if we had wanted to.

**Harbour Master:** We were not required to complete any formalities with the Harbour Master himself but he was very helpful in helping us track down Customs and Immigration.

**Customs:** Customs are located inconveniently out of town. Ask the Harbour Master for help and he will get them to come to the dock or direct you to a taxi. Customs will want to see your check-in papers and will clear you out. It helps to mail Patrick Kinavai [kinavaip@customs.gov.pg](mailto:kinavaip@customs.gov.pg) 24 to 48 hours in advance of your arrival. His number is 457 1192. Other yachts have had their passports stamped by customs so go here first and ask if they will do it for you. We went to immigration first as customs were unavailable.

**Immigration:** We found the Immigration Officer at the airport 02 41.210S 141 17.966E but he does move around! Ask the Harbour Master or Customs to try and contact him first. A departure card is all that is needed and your passports will be stamped.

**Other facilities:** There were a few basic shops in town plus a small fresh market. We did not spend any time looking for anything else!

**Totem – December 2012:** Here is a rundown of practical information for Vanimo, PNG, based on our experience stopping there to clear out of the country before heading to Indonesia in December 2012. A more informal discussion is on our blog at <http://sv-totem.blogspot.com/2013/01/vanimo-part-1-just-quick-stopover-right.html>.

**Security:** While we didn't feel grossly unsafe in Vanimo, I don't think it's a good idea to hang around either- we heard first hand reports of theft from yachts, and second hand anecdotes from local folks about some pretty unpleasant violent crimes committed against visitors in town.

**Anchorage:** We anchored at 2-41.099, 141-17.789. There's not a great dinghy landing spot. We did not feel there was a secure spot to leave the dinghy opted to alternate trips ashore, shuttling the dinghy back and forth without leaving it on the beach. From where we dropped the hook, the easiest spot to disembark is adjacent to the concrete wharf near the container dock. It's just left of a bright green building and probably has a few open boats tied up and some people hanging around, as this is where open boats departing Vanimo gather.

**To get to the Indonesian consulate:** From the dinghy landing above, turn right on that road immediately on shore. Cross the first street at the green building (it will be on the near left corner), cross the second street at a church (far left corner), and turn right on the third street. The red/white Indonesian flag will be visible at the consulate, just down the block on the left hand side.

**Indonesian visas:** If we had perfect information about what the Indonesian consulate needed, and brought it with us at the beginning, we could have finished everything in one day. We had to

shuttle around to get photos and cash, so the resulting process took us two days- visas were not ready until the afternoon of the second day. We needed (besides passports of course!):

- Completed forms, provided onsite at the consulate
- Two passport photos per person (the orange pharmacy en route to the consulate has a photo printing machine)
- Copies of our cruising permit (CAIT)
- Copies of our sponsor letters and their ID cards
- Cash (in Kina only) to pay for visas

A form completed at the Indonesian consulate requests your email address. Our friends provided their sat phone address, which has since been used by someone from Vanimo to try and sell them gold bullion. We have not received any email, and suggest using a dummy address, or at least one you don't care about getting shady spam.

**Clearing customs:** Clearance was straightforward, once the customs officer arrived. The customs office is about a 20 min walk to the other side of the airport from the consulate: the consulate provided directions for walking there. We were warned about security in this area, and the official offered to provide a ride back to town (gratefully accepted).

**Forza – 2010:** Our friends on s/v Tonic had visited Vanimo as they were low on fuel and were woken at around 0230 as someone was stealing their jerry cans off the deck, fortunately they chased them off and got the cans back.

## 5 South Coast of PNG

### 5.1 Port Moresby and the National Capital Distric

**Blowin Bubbles – August 2018:** Cleared in and out of Port Moresby with no issues. Only charge was 55 kina(\$20) to quarantine. They even cleared in on a Sunday and out on a holiday Monday.

RPYC no longer has moorings. They have added more slips, total of 256, many are empty and available. Area surrounding is safe in daytime. Grocery stores on each side, one on left is a little cheaper but one on right is in a mall with an alcohol store.

RPYC offers free Wi-Fi in the club--just ask for passwords at the front desk. We toured many areas within a couple hours of Port Moresby and were never frightened. People were very kind and friendly.

Vodafone and Digicel are both available at the mall to the right, 3-minute walk, they seem to be expensive and often the systems are down. (160 kina \$70 for 5 GB) Man name Brian is the club welcome person and very knowledgeable. Has lived here for 60 yrs. he can help with almost any query.

**In September 2017**, a rally was organized from Cairns to Port Moresby.

Royal Papuan Yacht Club – Yacht Arrival Handbook (downloaded Aug 2017 from rpyc.com.pg)

Welcome to the Royal Papua Yacht Club. It is without doubt one of the finest yacht clubs in the South Pacific. We boast a very modern marina with berths varying from 9 – 25 metres, a

restaurant, Sail Café', bar, gymnasium, kids play areas, shower and toilet amenities, laundry and business centre.

The Royal Papua Yacht Club is a licensed facility and welcomes you, the visitor to enjoy our indoor and outdoor restaurant facilities and sample true Melanesian hospitality while being served by our friendly staff.

Contact:

Telephone: +675 3211700

Fax: +675 3214935

E-mail: [marina\\_admin@rpyc.com.pg](mailto:marina_admin@rpyc.com.pg) / [admin@rpyc.com.pg](mailto:admin@rpyc.com.pg)

VHF 84 is monitored from 0800 to 2000 daily. Radio Call sign: Papa Yankee Charlie or Marina Office

Administration:

Reception:	open 7 days a week 08:00 – 22.00	+675 3211700 / 3211723 / 3211082 / 3214356
Email:	<a href="mailto:admin@rpyc.com.pg">admin@rpyc.com.pg</a> & <a href="mailto:marina_admin@rpyc.com.pg">marina_admin@rpyc.com.pg</a>	
Postal Address:	PO Box 140 Port Moresby NCD	Section 44, Lot 14 Champion Parade, Granville
Executive Staff:	General Manager	Mr Aaron Batts
	Administration Manager	Mrs Ella Kasu
	Assistant Administration Manager	Ms Eva De Leon
	F&B Operations Manager	Mr Ashish Tripathy
	Assistant F&B Manager	Mr Mahiro Hivi
	Executive Chef	Mr James Morton
	Marina-Operations Manager	Mr Tony Santiago

ON ARRIVAL:

Contact the club on VHF Channel 84 duplex, call sign: *PAPA YANKEE CHARLIE* or *MARINA OFFICE* to advise us of your arrival and if required, the club will contact Quarantine and Customs on your behalf.

Proceed through the yacht club marina entrance and moor in the pond area on your port hand, either anchoring or pick up a mooring buoy.



Following Customs and Quarantine Clearance, you can either stay at that mooring or if available, arrange for a berth.

Shower, toilet and laundry facilities are located at the northern end on the ground floor – access keys and laundry tokens are available from reception. The children’s playground is at the other end of the clubhouse.

Dress Code for the Clubhouse:

- Neat and casual attire at all times
- Footwear must be worn at all times
- No hats allowed inside the club house
- No singlets or tanks tops
- No swimwear
- No soiled work clothes
- No Rubber thongs after 6pm
- Tasteful & non offensive t-shirts will be permitted

**Security** - 24 hr security at the marina and clubhouse.

**Mobiles** - Phone credit cards and internet wireless cards (Daltron/Datec) available at reception.

**Foreign Currency** – we exchange American Dollars, Australian Dollars, New Zealand Dollars and Euro. Also we accept MasterCard, Visa, American Express and EFTPOS.

**Gas** – for gas bottle refills, check with reception

**Fuel** – fuel pontoon opens Monday – Friday 08:00 – 17:00 Saturday 08:00 – 13:00 Sunday 08:00 – 12:00

**Business Centre** – at reception for email, fax, printing, photocopying

Embassies & High Commissions

Australian High Commission Godwit Road Waigani	www.dfat.gov.au	+ 675 325 9333
New Zealand High Commission Waigani Cres Waigani	nzhcpom@dg.com.pg	+675 325 9444 Opening hrs. Mon – Fri 08:00 - 12:00 13:00 – 16:30
Indonesian Embassy Lots 1 & 2 Sec 410 Kiroki St Waigani	kbripom@daltron.com.pg	+675 325 3544/325 3116 Opening hrs: Mon – Fri: 10:00 –12:00 14:00 - 16:00

## Supermarket

There is a supermarket within walking distance of the yacht club. Go out of the main gate and turn right, when you reach the corner go pass the service station and walk a little further and you will see the sign Waterfront shopping centre.

There is also another supermarket within walking distance of the yacht club. Go out of the main gate and turn left right, when you reach the corner left again go pass the ANZ Bank and Bank South Pacific and walk a little further and you will see the sign Stop N Shop.

## Bank

Also there is an ANZ Bank & Bank South Pacific next door within walking distance of the yacht club.

## Boat Services

Coastline Boats	Ron Posa	+675 325 3851	ron.posa@cme.com.pg
Steamships Marine Engineering Services	Chris De Villiers	+675 322 0426 /+ 675 321 4509	chris.devilliers@swirecnco.com
Finer Auto Electrical Services	Robert Pero	+ 675 323 5432	robertjpero@hotmail.com
Lohberger Engineering	Joel & Rolando	+675 340 2532 / 344 2814 7365 7874	Joel - 73936676
Boroko Motors - Marine Division	Guy Lamont	+675 325 5255	guy@borokomotors.com.pg
Ela Motors – Marine Division		+675 322 9448	
Webster Marine	Andrew Dumbui	+675 325 8179	
Track Marine Communications	David	+ 675 340 3945	
PNG Motors – Marine Division	Shaun Harrison	+ 325 5788 / 76209223	
Cav's Marine, trailers repairs as well	Allan Cavanagh	+ 72724986	

## Refrigeration & Air-conditioning

Daikin	Steve Tucky	+675 325 3555
PNG Air Conditioning	Maure Kilamanu	+675 325 6444
South Pacific Air conditioning	Rob Doyle	+675 321 5951

### Radio Communication

Ariel Communications	Norland Vitto	+675 325 0082
Rad-Tel	Reg Heron	+675 325 2555
Pacom Communications		+675 325 7111
Security Systems	Charlie Edmunds	+675 3230277
TE PNG		+675 325 6322

### Paints

Orica		+675 325 4555
Akzo Nobel		+675 325 3931

### Plumbers

Niugini Plumbers	Essell	+675 323 6565
Rad-Tel	Reg Heron	+675 325 2555

### Sail Makers, Canopy Repairs

Boroko Motors	Guy Lamont	+675 325 5111
Pryde Furniture	Raki	+ 675 325 4233
PNG Nesa Foam	Tony	+675 72890921
Cav's Marine, trailers repairs as well	Allan Cavanagh	+ 72724986

### Upholstery

PNG Foam	Tony or Geoff Yip	+675 325 9337 / 72890921
Pro-Clean		+ 675 320 1276
Pryde Furniture		+ 675 325 4233

### Gas Refills

Origin Energy		323 4033
Brian Bell Service Centre Gordons	Darren Gear	325 8066
Private	Raymon Yaniku	711 74587

**Published Rates** as of August 2017, for visiting yachts is K95 per day + GST of K9.5 for a marina berth and K62 per day + GST of K6.20 for mooring. Power and water available at extra cost.

**Alba – July 2015:** We arrived at the Royal Papuan Yacht Club Marina (after a 3 day trip from the Louisiades) in the early afternoon and, as instructed, anchored behind their breakwater (which they call The Pond). The charts show a depth of 1.1 metres on the approach to the marina, but we saw nothing less than 4 metres. We weren't too happy about the holding in the Pond because we dragged the first time having picked up some plastic sheeting with our anchor, but other cruisers have been fine there.

The marina office arranged for customs, immigration and quarantine to come out to the boat, so we had our formalities completed and were safely docked in a marina berth within two hours. The only fees were \$20USD for the animal and vegetable quarantine and \$50USD for health quarantine.

After a little bit of tidying up, we strolled into the yacht club, which is huge. It's more like a country club for rich Papuans and ex-pats (3,000 members) with a nice restaurant, a huge bar and even a big gym. We used one of the two ATM machines to get some kina and retired to the bar for a cold beer or three.

At the marina office's suggestion, we called in at a big 50 foot power-catamaran called "Utopia" and talked to a guy called Brian. He turned out to be a 73 year old, white Papua New Guinean and an ex-cruiser having sailed 40,000 miles on his ketch "Duck Soup". After plying us with wine, cheese and stories, Brian offered to get his driver to take us to the Indonesian Embassy tomorrow, which we gratefully accepted.

Brian drove us to his company, which is the largest estate agent in Papua New Guinea, employing over 50 people - a wealthy man. From the office, we were driven around by Paul, one of Brian's five sons, accompanied by Steve, who sailed with Brian and now looks after his boats.

Steve wanted to go to a vegetable market, so we accompanied him walking around the closely packed stalls. There are hundreds of thousands of people living in Port Moresby with over 80% unemployment, so there are a lot of people living in poverty and the city has a very bad reputation for hold-ups and theft. We're always very careful about our belongings when in local markets and we were especially careful here, but I didn't notice two rascals following us.

As we were the only white people (Dim dims) in the market, everyone was looking at us, so it was hard to for us to notice these two guys. However, the market stall holders spotted them and suddenly one stall holder leapt up and gave one of the rascals a huge slap around the head and started to scream at him. Within seconds, the rascal had twenty people haranguing him and he was chased out of the market. The stall holders all apologized to us, which was nice.

Paul then took us to a large computer store to buy a couple of things. On the way there we passed hundreds of people sitting on the sidewalks, in the dirt, with small selections of things for sale - limes, betel-nut, a few cigarettes. What a difference at the store, there were guards on the gate into the car park, guards on the door, guards inside the store. The store was huge with

wall-to-wall high tech equipment, marble floors and air conditioning. There's an incredible difference in wealth here.

We were taken to the Indonesian Embassy, where we filled in a very straight-forward visa application form. We applied for a 60 day Social visa (211/60), which we can extend for another 30 days when we're in Indonesia. For each application, they wanted one photograph, one copy of a sponsorship letter, one copy of our Cruising permit (CAIT) and 120 kina (\$40USD).

We told the visa officer that we wanted to leave Port Moresby on Friday 24th July. Thursday is a public holiday, so the guy said that he'd process it quickly for us and we could go back the next day.

Back at the boat, we had a couple of hours chilling out and sorting out emails then walked up a large supermarket, which is 10 minutes outside the secure fence of the Yacht club. It's bizarre to walk out of the decadent luxury of the Yacht Club onto the streets where the locals are trying to sell stuff or waiting for a bus and chewing betel-nut. There are betel-nut husks scattered around everywhere and the white concrete pavements are covered in blobs of bright red spit - it's disgusting.

The government is trying to stop the habit and has made it illegal to chew and spit in public places within the city limits. There are signs on the shops and gates into private businesses - "No chewing betel-nut", but the poor locals just ignore it all. I guess that it's as addictive as smoking, so will be difficult to stop. Brian hates the habit and forces his employees to brush their teeth on arrival at his office.

In the evening, we retired to the luxurious Yacht Club bar and had a few beers with Rob and Irene from "Peggy West". They are also heading off to Indonesia to join the Sail Indonesia rally.

Glenys spent most of the next morning running backwards and forwards to the marina's laundrette. Meanwhile, I tackled the problem of getting fuel. There's a fuel dock in the marina with automated pumps, which take non-refundable, pre-paid fuel cards. This is a great solution for the regular members, but I wanted to fill up my tank and jerry cans and didn't know exactly how much fuel I would need.

I estimated that I'd need 200 litres of fuel, which would cost 600 kina (\$180US), so I played cautious and bought 5 \* 100 kina cards. We motored over to the fuel dock and, unfortunately, I could only squeeze 400 kina worth into my tank, so I'm left with a non-refundable 100 kina card (\$30USD) - bummer! I gave it to Brian as a thank you for driving us around.

In the afternoon, we cadged a lift from Brian into the Indonesian Embassy and picked up our passports with our 60 day visas and then went to the supermarket to do a big two trolley re-provisioning. We caught a taxi back to the yacht club, dumped the shopping on board and retired to the bar for beers and a bar meal. We're planning to leave on the 24th for our 1,100 mile passage through the Torres Straits to Indonesia.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Day:** It was a public holiday today. The boat looked like a bomb had hit it with provisions all over the place, but we left it all there and went out for a day trip on "Utopia". Brian had also invited "Peggy West" and an ex-pat couple called Ernie and Lorraine.

"Utopia" is a 50 foot catamaran with two big engines, which will do over 15 knots in calm seas. It's quite bizarre screaming along at those speeds with nothing tied down. Brian took us for a

tour around the harbour, which is a large, deep, natural port which housed the whole of the American Pacific Fleet during the Second World War.

There are the semi-sunken remains of a warship and ruined Army buildings in the harbour, with large areas outside the harbour that are dangerous because of it was a former mined area and there may still be unexploded ordnance on the sea bed.

After our jaunt around the harbour, we headed out to Manubada Island, which is a favourite haunt of the Yacht Club members. It's only 5 miles from the marina, but is a pleasant little island with a white sand beach. There were three large traditional, Papuan barges on the beach.

Glenys and I went snorkelling for an hour, but the water was disappointingly murky, but I saw some Razorfish - strange thin fish that hang about vertically with their heads down. We had a boozy lunch, chilled out then whizzed back to the marina. Nice day out.

**Leaving:** The day didn't start too well. Customs and Immigration said that they'd come to the marina between eight and nine o'clock to clear us out, but didn't show up until half past eleven; and then only after three "reminder" telephone calls from the marina office. We were ready to cast off our ropes at nine o'clock, so by the time that they arrived, I was sick to death of waiting around.

We finally managed to get away by midday.

**Mokisha – July 2013:** As I sit here in Port Moresby, we are in our last few hours of being in Papua New Guinea. Tomorrow we head west once again for Indonesia. It will be a 10 to 12 day sail & we've been waiting for weather for several days. The Torres Straits between Australia & PNG have been blowing 30+ knots and 5 meter seas for over a week. We want a great passage!

Before we arrived in Port Moresby there was a quote in the Lonely Planet for the yacht club – “The last Bastion of white elite imperialism”. Only a trace of that remains today. Instead it is a mixing bowl of expats and locals. Corruption abounds and yet part of the culture. Australians & Expats are plentiful. Inequality and wages are astounding. Money here flows and yet next to a highrise is the poorest of poor. A waiter or waitress at the yacht club makes 80 Kina a week or about \$40 U.S. a week! Port Moresby is expensive though and many of these people live in 'stilt' house over the water. No electricity, toilets are open to the water and the bare necessities rule their lives with out much opportunity. Sad, really.

In any event, Port Moresby has been a surprise and a pleasure. We heard all kinds of rumors about kidnapping, beheading, violence, etc. some of those things do exist but we were careful & met several locals who carted us around getting boat parts and supplies. A local Brian extended his hand & helped us out quite a bit. One Sunday we headed out for a relaxing day on his yacht. Two other days we hired his employee, John. Rented a van and 10 of us cruisers headed out to explore the area. We went to the Highlands, an animal conservatory, botanical gardens, and Parliament house. It was a wonderful 2 days. The yacht club here has been extra friendly. We basked in the luxury of unlimited water, a slip and yacht club food & bar. Pics are in the picture gallery. 10 days in Port Moresby has been fabulous.

## 5.2 Orangerie Bay

**Mokisha – June 2013:** On our way from the Louisiades to Port Moresby, doing day-hops, we stopped at Orangerie Bay.

We ventured into the reefs at Orangerie Bay on the S side of PNG where the few local people we met said they had never seen a yacht in those waters. Using very accurate AUS charts from Chartworld we were encouraged to venture where no one we knew of had gone and the Sailing Directions, Pub 164, said were not adequately charted.

## 5.3 Suau Island

**Free Bird – November 2014:** Our first anchorage after crossing from Cairns was at Suau Island near 10-42 S / 150 15 E. Lottie and David Hesaboda was the couple we had the most contact with and are very helpful. The anchorage here is on the route that the local kids take to school in their canoes and they will stop in for a chat everyday, which is entertaining. Be sure to specify that afternoon visits are preferred to morning ones.

# 6 Cmap Chart Offsets for OpenCPN

My copy (Updated 2010) of the CM93 Edition 2 charts are quite off in the Marshall Islands. However, some of the charts are very detailed. So it is useful if using OpenCPN to apply offsets to make the Cmap charts somewhat line up with the Google Earth charts we are using.

The below is pretty techie stuff.

I make no warranty that these offsets won't put you on a reef.

Use this info with extreme caution. No guarantees!!

## 6.1 How to Apply Offsets in OpenCPN

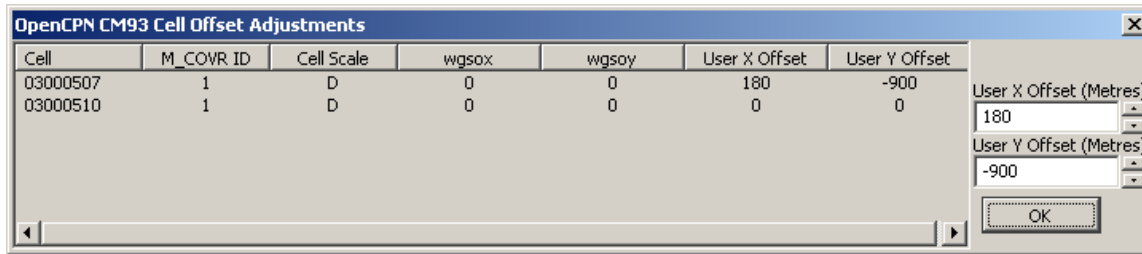
Unlike Maxsea, when you apply offsets to "correct" CM93 charts in OpenCPN, it shifts the chart, not the GPS position. (this is the right way to do it).

Here's a quick rundown on calculating the offset and applying it:

1. Drop a mark in OpenCPN on a prominent feature on a GoogleEarth chart for an atoll. (end of an island, or center of a pass, for example)
2. Turn off Chart Quilting (F9 key, or use the Settings Dialog). There are two easy ways to tell whether Chart Quilting is on or off.
  - a. If the colored ovals at the bottom of the screen have square corners instead of oval corners, quilting is off.
  - b. If you right-click on the CM93 chart (anywhere), the pop-up window will have an additional menu item "CM93 Offset Dialog"

Pressing F9 again will turn quilting back on.

3. Right-click on the CM93 chart and select "CM93 Offset Dialog". This pops up the OpenCPN CM93 Cell Offset Adjustments window:



Normally, if you are zoomed in, you will only see one line (the most detailed chart). Regardless, click on the line to highlight that line. Then enter the offsets in the box to the right. X offsets move the chart left and right. Y offsets move the chart up and down. As soon as you TAB out of the entry field, the offset will be applied. (Clicking OK also applies the offset, but also closes the window).

Keep fiddling with the offsets until the mark you dropped on the prominent feature on the GoogleEarth view, lines up correctly on the CM93 view.

- Now check the offset in several other places on the chart. Often you will get it perfect in one spot, and it will be off in another spot. This is the nature of imperfect charts. Fiddle until you are happy with it... either the pass you intended to go in is dead-on, or you have an average view.

Notes:

See the OpenCPN help file for more info (there's not a lot in v3.2.2, but may be in the future).

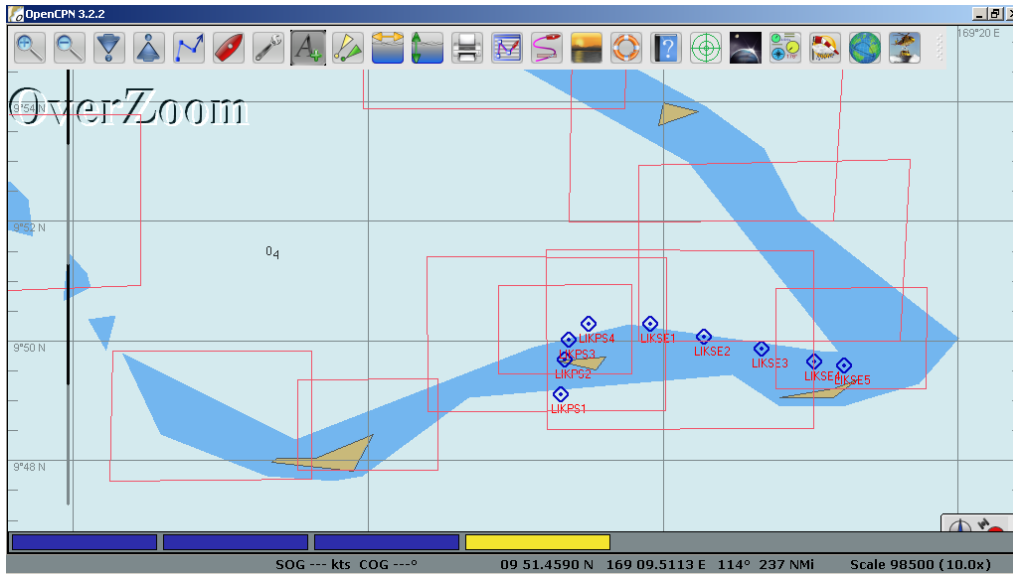
In OpenCPN, these offsets are, I think, saved in the CM93 folder in the OpenCPN folder in the Program Data folder (see the Help/About tab for where the log file is... that's where you'll also find a CM93 folder.) (ie where the layers folder is).

They appear to be saved in a file that is named the same as your CM93 chart folder name. Backing up this folder, AND keeping the same naming convention on another computer MIGHT allow you to transport these offsets to another computer. I haven't found any other way in OpenCPN to do so.

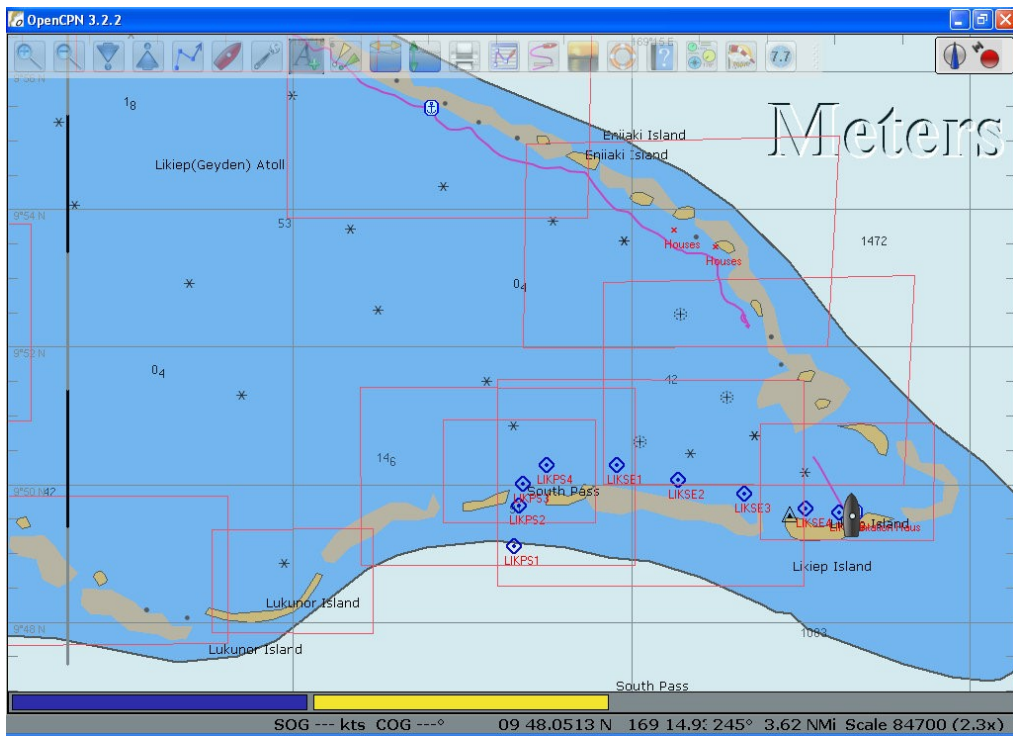
**Warning:** There are a LOT of different CM93 chart sets floating around. Offsets for a 2010 version of charts (what mine are) may not be appropriate for a 2011 (or 2005) version of charts.

Also, if your set of charts have been made from combined directories (ie copying an "update" into an existing CM93 directory, some charts may be there that are not in someone else's "2010" list. Example: Below is a screen shot from the most detailed chart I have for Likiep Atoll on one computer.





And here is about the same view with the "same" chart set on another computer:



Note considerably more detail. This chart, 2940504, dated 2010-03-01, does not exist apparently in the "latest" 2010 chart set. (it also won't be displayed by Maxsea, even if it is present in the CM93 folder).

## 6.2 Offset List

I make no warranty that these offsets won't put you on a reef. Use this info with extreme caution. No guarantees!! USE YOUR OWN EYEBALLS and only navigate in reefy areas with good light (or satellite charts)!!

Place	Chart Cell	M COV R ID	Cell Scal e	X Offset	Y Offset	My Chart Date	Comments
<b>Western Islands</b>							
Wuvulu	02580420	2	C	-1750	2500	2011	<b>Note major difference between two islands near each other on same chart block</b>
Manu Island	02580420	2	C	1050	150	2011	
Luf Island, Hermit Group	02650435	1	E	2450	350	2005	
SE Entrance, Hermit Group	02650435	1	E	2500	400	2011	
Pityilu Island, N Coast Manus	02640441	1	E	-600	1400	2005	
Kalipo Island, SE of Manus	02610441	1	D	-700	1600	2005	

