

Interview with Cheryl Kornberg
Vanuatu, 2005.

Stephanie: First of all, one thing I didn't do with Steve is get a formal introduction. So, would you be willing to tell me your name and where you're from?

Cheryl: My name is Cheryl Kornberg, and I'm from Berkeley, California. And now residing in Hawaii.

S: And how long have you been sailing on the Gershon 2?

C: Since 1997.

S: So, that's let's see – about 8 years

C: m hmmm – on and off.

S: Out of that 8 years how much time have you been spending, have you spent on the boat?

C: well it was chopped up, you know it would be a year at a time then maybe six months at a time. Two months, a year, that kind– so, maybe three years.

S: Three years out of eight.

C: But off and on.

S: That's a pretty significant chunk of time. Had you ever sailed before 1997?

C: Just a few times like in Hawaii, once in the bay area, places on lakes, you know, Hobie Cats – nothing like cruising – crossing major oceans – none of that. 1:20

S: So, what made you start sailing?

C: Oh, I fell in love! [Laughs]

S: You fell in love?

C: I fell in love with Steve. And I'd always really wanted to sail I guess, somewhere deep in my subconscious I wanted to be on the water and I figured I was in Hawaii and I thought "here I am surrounded by water and I'm not even on a boat!" and I really had a desire to be on a sailboat and I kind of put it out there and it happened.

S: What do you mean you put it out there?

C: Oh, I just thought of what I wanted and dreamed about and said hey you know you need to be on a boat. And actually, I put it in one of my little dream banks I had written about saying I wanted to sail around the world. [Laughs] And it happened!

2:15

S: What do you mean a dream bank?

C: Oh, it was probably one of those emotional exercises they say "write down all the dreams" – I think it was from one of the books I read, and it said "write down all of the things you want in your life" so I just randomly just started writing down 100 things I wanted and one of them was I wanted to go sail around the world.

This was years before I met Steve.

S: But was it with Steve that you went and sailed around the world?

C: I haven't we haven't sailed around the world, but it's closer than I was before!

[Laughs]

2:50

S: So where do you sail? Where do you and Steve sail?

C: Well we sail from Hawaii down to the Marquesas. That was my very first voyage. 19 days all to weather. And I didn't know any better – I didn't know any different. [Laughs] – Like, ok.

[Laughs.]

Uh from the Marquesas, over to Tahiti, Tuamotos, up to Cook islands, Raratonga, and those places, over to Tonga, actually Vavau in Tonga. From there over to Fiji to New Zealand, and that was a year's trip. And then we worked and then came back and then went from New Zealand back up to Fiji, because we loved it and didn't see enough of the 300 islands that were there. Went over to Vanuatu, which is where we are right now, and saw quite a bit of it, and loved it. Saw some really extraordinary things. From there we went to I think it was New Caledonia. And from New Caledonia back down to New Zealand, and another time came back from New Zealand and went back up to New Caledonia for six months, really explored the Loyalty Islands, and from there went to Australia – I probably have this a little out of sequence – I'd have to go back to my journal to give you exact times but that's where – and then we've gone from Australia to New Zealand.

4:18

C: And back. So, we've – let's see, South Pacific mainly because when we leave our boat to work we have to leave it in either Australia or New Zealand.

S: When you say "All to weather" what does that mean?

C: You're right pointed into the wind, pretty much.

S: Which means what?

C: Which means what? Oh, you're hard on the wind. So, you – well you can call it you're smashing the weather if you want. It's not a broad reach where the wind is behind you, it's not downwind where the wind is right behind you, it's right on the nose or off the nose a little bit, it makes it for – you're heeled the whole time. And it's not – it's not on the beam – the beam is directly on the side of your boat.

5:15

S: So how did you meet Steve? Which came first, the boat or Steve? Which did you find first?

C: Both. Because my friend that I was working with said she had been sailing with these people, and she was having such a great time she said "why don't you come sailing?" I finally arranged it so – I was working a lot in Hawaii – and went sailing, and I met Steve – we were on his boat – and I wasn't I was not available at the time. I was married. And then I didn't get a chance to go sailing much after that.

6:00

C: And then I consequently went through a divorce and went out on my friend Terry's boat, and met Steve again, and I was single, and that's how I met him.

S: How far apart were the two incidences?

C: About a year, I guess. I don't really know for sure but it must have been about a year. And that's how – how I met him on a different term you know. We didn't even consider each other, because I was married. But once I was single, and he was single, neither one of us attached – hey! And it was just – kind of happened. Started going out. Went out on our first sailing date. That was fun.

S: When was that?

C: Actually, it was our first date. And he was on his way to Maui. He had been - we'd been trying to get together, and I had company in town and finally he called and he said, you know, we were going to Maui but the channel was really stormy and we decided to come back to this beautiful little bay. He said can you come down and meet me down there? So, I said sure. So I drove down, hiked down the lava to this beautiful white sand beach I mean it's just gorgeous the aqua water I mean and he–

S: What bay was this?

C: Makalavena. Or maka lavena, whatever you want to call it, and you know that's beautiful, right? Powdery white sands, and here he was rowing in a little dinghy, picks me up, and so we went sailing that day, and there were more whales than you can believe. It as like – there's another one breaching, there's another one – they were outrageous, it was such a magical day. And that was our first date and then he drove me back to get my car, and oh we had to go back to the harbor, to bring in the boat, and then he drove me back to my car, we watched the sunset, he kisses me – boom. That was it.

7:59

C: Never been apart!

S: Really!

C: yeah.

S: And what were you doing before you met Steve? What were you.

C: Oh, I was working in the mornings out at the Hilton Hotel doing banquets. And in the afternoons, I was doing massages. Cause I had my own little business – massage business.

S: And this was in Kona?

C: m-hmm

S: and was any of your family in Kona as well?

C: My sister was there for a while. And then she moved back to Nevada. So, I'm the only one. They don't like me living there of course. [Laughs.]

S: Because they miss you.

C: Yeah, but they like Hawaii too, so maybe they will again, who knows? 8:48

S: So, you and Steve have been together since 97? Is that right?

C: Actually 95.

S: Oh 95.

C: yeah.

[Rain starts about now]

S: And you were married before then for how long?

C: 18 years

S: 18? Wow. I guess it's a big difference from your last–

C: Yeah that was more of a mountain, mountain scene.

S: What do you mean it was more of a mountain scene that's what you told me before.

C: Well it was a quarter acre of land, about 3500 feet up in the mountains, you'd have to cross-country ski up to the house when the snow was three feet deep. [Laughs]

S: So this was not Kona, this was–

C: This was up in the Sierra foothills, in California. S: What was the town?

C: It was out of Twainheart? Sonora area, up from Modesto, near between Tahoe and Yosemite.

S: But he must have moved with you to Hawaii.

C: Yes.

S: And once you got to Hawaii it just wasn't working out any more.

C: yup.

S: So how do you like – how did you like – once you got on the boat and were like sailing, doing your sailing dates, what did you think?

C: Before '67 we went, before we got together you mean?

S: Well I guess you kind of got together at the same time, right?

10:21

C: Well he was living on his boat, basically. Oh, I was fascinated by the whole idea. I don't know if I was quite ready for a year experience at first? But I was in love, what can I say! [Laughs.] And I think I really like the whole idea of it. But it's a different thing, when you're going to break down the three bedroom house you're renting and giving up your – well I had a practice I had started. And then just like – leave. That was the hardest thing for me to do, even though I was really ready for the adventure.

11:15

C: It was kind of a big leap of faith that I'd really like it. I mean, how do you know? I mean jumping right out there I didn't know how I'd feel about sailing.

S: So, it sounds like you guys got together and right away you were being asked to fold up your life and come on board.

C: Yeah we'd been together for a bit, and–

S: Was the boat finished?

C: Yeah. Other than you know putting the trim here and there, you know basically. I mean it's a comfortable boat, and he did make sure that he had two other crew when we went sailing so that I would feel safe and you know, not, break me in kind of slowly, though how do you break someone in slowly when you take them 19 days to weather, you know? It's not exactly. But we had very competent guys helping us and one guy stayed with us for a year while we sailed and that was nice because it's a lot to handle a 50 foot boat. Especially when you still have your sails aren't roller furling, they're hanked on, which is, most sailboats now have roller furling where you reel them in. Two lines, and these you just have to hoist them up so it's harder work .

12:46

S: What was the what was the worst part of your first trip? And what was the best part of your first trip?

C: I think the worst part was the first week. You know I did get seasick, so I did have to take pills. And I wasn't –I think I was too anxious. You know I was anxious about the whole thing. And not really understanding the ocean and getting a feel for it, it was really it was my harder time I think. But after that I really enjoyed all the adventure you know, it was my favorite time. There were so many great times, because I like to explore.

13:29

C: Favorite time. I don't know if I could name a favorite time, there were just so many of them. There were just a lot of them.

S: So, does the fact that you're sailing almost half the time now set you apart from your old friends? Do you feel like when you're talking with your old friends, like you're not connecting as well, or I mean is there a different do you have a different relationship now with people?

C: Some friends I do, some I don't. Some it's just like, it never went away. You know we just get together and just connects other people, some friends don't like it that you leave, so they have to go get new best friends, [laughs] – they do! And then you come back it's like – wow. But most of my friends remain my friends. I think the hard one is my massage therapist. Ever since we've taken the class together, we've traded massages with each other every week. So when we leave it's like oh! We both go through massage withdrawals. Because, and that's hard because - I obviously can't replace her because I'm not given massages at all, and she has a hard time replacing me because she doesn't know anybody that does the same technique that we learned. So that's a hard one so we're always glad to see each other because we're oh god I need a massage so bad! [Laughs] You know.

15:01

C: But most of my friends are pretty cool but it does strain it to a degree. But some friends you know have been keeping touch with me by e-mail, which has been really nice and I've gotten more into that and that's been helpful.

S: Do you feel like a different person? I mean it sounds like completely life changing.

C: Yes, I do feel different. I feel more confident about my sailing, for sure. And Steve and I have done a little more sailing by ourselves. And that has helped me a lot. We do try to get people to go with us and friends like to join us on passages, because it makes the watches just so much easier. Otherwise you know you're like three hours on three hours off, three hours on, and you do that for days! These couples are exhausted – I don't know how they do it. It's really nice to have other people in the boat too. It's fun to share - we both like being able to share the experiences with other people as well. But it's - yes, it's different perspective. I always wanted – I was just telling Terry tonight that when I would go into people's homes and I would see these native looking things up on the shelves, I'd go "wow, I wonder where they got that". I was always intrigued by other cultures and travel. And now I'm doing it, and I'm just – I love that. Sometimes the sailing can be tried, you know, because you don't have your showers, you know your regular kind of showers. You don't have the convenience of going to the store and getting exactly what you want. You just kind of have to settle for what they have, it's pretty good most of the places, and stock up. But it does – it gets you down a little bit sometimes. You know, you miss your family. But since we have the phone that makes it easier. The phone has made a big difference, and my family feels more connected now. And I do try to write postcards, and I try to get to the internet as much as I can, and just connect with everybody, do a blanket kind of like you know, cc everybody, cause I go "sorry I only have so much time – it's costing me \$20 an hour on the internet so I'm only going to do a short one." Then I just kind of do that, so that's how I stay connected.

17:34

C: I think friendships are all about staying – you have to put a certain amount of energy into friendships. I've always found that, and I love it, I love my friends and if you don't communicate with them, tell them where you are and what you're doing, they don't feel connected either. So, because I made an effort to do that when I go back we don't feel disjointed, if that answers your question.

S: It seems like a - it just seems like such a different life entirely. It's interesting to me that sailing has such a grip on people, you know? It does seem like, it's almost like you have to choose between, I don't know, one love and another. If you're going to be cruising mode, you're really choosing to live a separate life from other people.

C: If I can go back and visit I'm fine. You know. I don't know what it would be like to be doing it for five years we've never done it on that you know stretch of time. We've done it a year at a time – that was it, of course. You work for a while, you make some money to go do it you come back. You run out of money you go back and work and come back and – so it has worked out well. I mean everyone says "oh no she's going to be gone again"

19:05

C: And we all like scramble around to see each other before we take off and that's the hard part, you know. You miss people. You know. And a lot of my friends don't really like sailing – I mean they're not sailors. But I've met some really great people like in New Zealand that love to sail and have their own and they join us in different, Vanuatu and Fiji and–

19:28

C: And it's really fun. So, I have some good friends I've met like in New Zealand, we've been there so many different times. I don't know. I think I just kind of take it as it is, or where I'm at, and just make the best of a situation, whether I'm renting an office or sailing. Oh you know I complain you know naturally, I get in my moods. I hate this, you know, but I thought hey, be grateful. Look what you have I mean you are so – I tell myself you're so rich. You're out sailing, you're doing what people dream about doing.

20:07

C: You're doing it.

S: You were telling me about this incredible ceremony that you got to watch in Vanuatu.. I was just thinking I wonder what the most amazing – you were saying one of the best things about sailing was just having the opportunity to explore different cultures and different people, and does that stand out in your mind as a highlight?

C: Oh. Definitely. I mean its–

S: Do you mind telling me about it one more time?

C: Well it was very much like a National Geographic moment. Going to an area where – we actually went to an area where the anthropologist had decided to do filming and the whole filming of ancient rituals that were being lost, and he wanted to get it in a film before the millennium. To put in the archives of the museum of Port Vila. And he is a curator of that museum, and we'd heard about this from another yacht, and said oh what an opportunity, let's do it. So, we actually was the first sailboat in this bay. And then this other sailboat comes with these two women. They were hilarious.

21:29

C: And they sail in and there were like 20 boats, in this big bay and getting ready to go into this ceremony and actually you couldn't even have done it unless you had a boat, because there was very little accommodations, it was one small place and the anthropologist and the other guys were taking it up. And you'd see the guys normally during the day, they had their shorts on, the chiefs and stuff and then they'd be dressed up for this ceremony at night, or not at night necessarily but during the day. And they had this big pig tusk you know, they have to be completely – come around. And they would wear those and then there would be the namba where da kine would be wrapped in a banana leaf and they would wear it hoisted up. And wear it strapped around, and they'd be wearing feathers and all kinds of stuff hanging off. But this was the dress and these were the nambas, and it's in the island of Malakula, in Vanuatu.

S: What do you mean by “da kine”?

C: It's a penis sheath is what it is. And they kind of wrap it in banana leaf. And there were several different ceremonies that we went to. The biggest one was – they had built a huge wall with all this elaborate design of leaves and feathers and stuff and then they had carvings up on this high kind of a platform way up high and shooting arrows and this was all being recorded by the yachties around didn't know what was going on.

23:06

C: And then they had the women on the side in this one area, in the grass skirts and they were bare-breasted, and there was a center where they had all the drumming going on and the guys were all dancing around it and they all had the penis sheaths on. And then they were shooting arrows over this wall and none of us knew what this ritual was – it would have been really fun to have done some research and found out what we were watching other than it was a grading[?] Ceremony. But I just was so into it, I just loved it. Now the men could get closer than the

women. We had to take pictures from afar so I had Steve with a camera up close so he could get some really great photos and that was really fun, that was really a great experience.

S: Are there a lot of – do you feel like there are a lot of great places that you’ve been able to see cause because you’ve been on a boat that you wouldn’t have been able to see otherwise?

C: People ask me, well do you love Fiji? I go, I love Fiji.

24:18

C: And I realize when I send them to Fiji, they’re not going to see it the way I did. They’re not going to go to this one place that we went to where there was nobody on this island. It was just yours basically for the day until another yacht comes in or something. You’re not going to see that unless you go on an adventure, eco-adventure tour. And I thought “god what an experience, just to be able to go in with your home, in your own bed, with any kind of thing you want to cook on your boat, and just get in the dinghy and go snorkeling to these incredible places where the water’s still pristine. And oh, my highlight this year was when we were in Fiji –

25:04

C: Is we’d heard about the manta rays. So, we’re going over to this little pass – we anchor and get in the dinghy and go out there and Steve goes, look there they are! He goes jump in now! I go what do you mean jump in with them? They’re huge! They’re like five foot wing span, six, they’re big! So I jump in. Little do I know it’s a pass and I’m like sweeping back and Steve’s like way forward. And I’m like “wait, wait for me” because I can’t keep up with these guys it was really strong, so then we both just got in out of the dinghy, hung on to the dinghy, and drifted with these guys, swimming along with these manta rays, they were incredible they were huge, I mean it was like 15 of them just through this whole pass it was - I was so into taking photographs I just barely I couldn’t almost – you know how you photograph and then you don’t really study it as much so it’ll be fun to see how they come out. And I like doing underwater photography – not that I’m good at it ‘cause I guess you have to have a better camera, but it’s fun. I like the underwater, I like to snorkel. It’s like a whole nother world.

S: How was it joining up with Steve when he’s been doing this for so many years already? Did he have already these sailing buddies and you were kind of the newcomer on this? How–

C: Steve always made me feel very inclusive in everything. We were both very in love and still are.

26:42

C: And he says this is your boat. And they were all great people I love all our friends now that were his friends. They’re sailors. Maybe I don’t have quite the passion that – I know I don’t have the passion Steve has for sailing because I get much too frustrated you know the wind changes. I go “excuse me, why are you coming from the other direction? We got to change the sails, you know it’s like couldn’t you just like stay in one direction so I can finish this book or something? I’m not really patient when it comes to changing sails. And then I’ll get, ok all right, all right. I forget where I was going with that.

S: Oh, I was asking you how it was to be with Steve’s friends.

27:32

C: Oh, joining – you know it just came real natural, I liked all his friends, and we just all got along and started sailing and I still get – when I get people on board and I want to make sure everyone’s happy and I want to play hostess, it creates a certain amount of anxiety before I get it all ready. I’m like, “god do I have enough food do I have enough this enough that, or are they going to like this?” You know what it’s like when someone comes to your house you want to get it all perfect and then once you’re there you just kind of relax – it’s the same with sailing. You

get all provisioned, and then you go out and have a good time. But that's where my anxiety I think is, is just getting stocked up, because what if you're out of baking powder? It's not like you can go to any store and buy it. I mean you may go to a little village and they have like two things of sugar.

28:31

C: A pound of butter. Oh no that calls for refrigeration, they don't have refrigeration – [laughs], they only have sugar and flour and matches and soap and detergent and that may be it. So, you have to have everything on your boat. You're totally self-contained. Like Steve has the plumbing shop and the electrical shop and all the lubrication shops for all the greases and oils and you have to have everything, your little world is right here.

29:02

C: And that concept would really freak a lot of people out. I think you know that you couldn't just go and buy something when you need it? And that you have to make sure that you have it all, right here.

[Tr. 8]

S: Yachties–

C: M-hmm

S: Perceived by the people in the area where you go – like the like in a place like Fiji, where there's lots of people who arrive on yachts. Are you given different treatment anyhow?

C: By the locals?

S: Yeah by the locals, by the people who are in the tourist business – is there a different set of expectations for you because you're on a boat?

C: Most resorts welcome you –they're pretty cool. You know they like your business, you come in you buy dinners. You know some of them are like, you know, you yachties you're so cheapskates some of them. But there's a lot of yachties that have a lot of money, they're retired and you know, spend a lot of money. Now if you go to – you're talking about Fiji right?

C: In general, well like in New Zealand they really sponsor yacht business. They go out of their way to make it easy for you.

1:00

C: in Fiji it's pretty easy too – they like yachties. Tonga they do Vanuatu they go in to different anchorages, and one of the few places where people come out in little pongas and visit you straightaway. You anchor, they're on you.

S: Why?

C: Why? [Laughs]. I mean you're like opportunity in their bay – so they're going who – what you got to trade? You know – and yachties, the word has gotten out in cruising guides to not just give gifts but to trade because then they'll start expecting to get handouts. So, they'll ask if you have t-shirts and then it's really cool because I'll ask sometimes what kind of vegetables they might have, and so they'll go and bring me back vegetables the next day and I'll pay them for it. But there would be times when I would get into an anchorage and I'd really be dying to take a shower and it's a solar shower and you kind of feel like ok, there's four boats around the boat, I'd really like to say “get out of here guys, I want to take a shower.” [Laughs]. But they're just curious.

But that's one of the few places I've been so far, is Vanuatu and they just- I think the just you are their big ship come in or something it's like opportunity, like I wonder what they have to trade?

2:22

C: I mean what else are they doing on these little remote places? You know, you're just kind of like, hmmm, what's that all about? We've taken pictures like Polaroid pictures and they loved it. That was the best. And then people would come up and say, "wait wait I want to go get my best dress on." Or "let me go get my grandkid", you know? And one guy actually came up to the boat and asked if we'd take a picture of him. Oops sorry we ran out of film. You know how Polaroid is you just use the packs up.

S: That's too bad.

C: I know.

S: How is it amongst the other yachties? I mean is there a yacht kind of culture? Does it change from place to place?

3:10

C: Yacht culture. Never heard that term before. I'm trying to

S: Like for example do you tend to see the same people over and over again, and do they have their own sort of community, like cliques. How do they, how do people who own boats deal with each other?

C: Well let me just give you a little, not a little history but just a concept here. Let's say one year, like we started out one year like in the Marquesas, some people would come over from Mexico to the Marquesas, like us down from Hawaii, and you'd kind of travel together. When you all converge like that you know everyone's heading across the south pacific. And that's when you keep running into each other because you go down to this bay and then you go over here and then you catch up with them a couple of weeks over here. And you get together, and you do a lot of little cocktails, you don't do dinner so much, because everyone only has so much food, so you do like come over for cocktails or bring your own cocktails because hey "you guys got any ice over there?" "Oh yeah come over, we have some over at my place." So, everyone has different financial levels and stuff and maybe some have kids and you're kind of running, they call it coconut runs through the islands. And you know you're either headed to New Zealand or Australia because you got to put your boat, you gotta be in the safe zone, somewhere out of the cyclone season. Or maybe you could take it up to Fiji if there are some places. That's kind of how you connect with that year with people. Now if you keep going around the world with them then you'll stay in touch. But then there's a whole new flotilla of people coming through Marquesas again, around, and you may not see people you know, like, we'll be down in New Zealand several times and be on different agendas, and our friends, our other friends are in Europe, now. They, when we stopped in New Zealand they kept going on to Australia, and then up to Thailand and then up to the Red Sea.

5:18

But they went up when it was still pretty mellow to go up to the Red Sea, before the war and everything, so I don't think we'll do that, but we're not in a rush to leave the South Pacific – there's too much to see.

S: But it does sound like there's a curr – there's a current that kind of people get on, because there's a certain time of year that's the time to go to see certain places and so when people are going around the world you can almost predict where they're going to go and when they're going to—

C: They have to get out of certain areas before cyclones hit. If you don't you'll be wishing you did! [Laughs]. Believe me, it's there are some scary times out there.

S: Have you guys ever been caught in the cyclone?

C: yeah.

6:09

S: When? What happened?

C: Let's see we were in Raratonga in June and it was supposed to be happening. It wasn't real high winds, it was about 70 knots and we decided to get out of the marina. Actually, the harbormaster said to get out of – it wasn't a marina exactly, it was just a wall you tie to then you anchor out Tahiti-tie kind of thing. And they said to leave there and go to the other side. And we said ok, and a lot of boats didn't. And we were on the other side and they didn't figure it would cross that side, well the cyclone has decided to take a left turn, it came right over the top of us. And, [laughs], we were all ready for it if it hit, because we were right – had things on our radar, had GPS coordinates, you know, cause there was another boat out there with us so we would hit each other if for some reason. And you know when you're out there and you can't see a thing because it's raining so hard, our radar whited out it was raining so hard, and one of the crew was in the cockpit, she had an inflatable on, and it rained so hard through the [?] up there, it set her lifejacket off – [laughs].

S: What do you mean it set her lifejacket off?

C: Well you know the inflatable ones? It doesn't usually go off unless you go in the water?

S: I see.

C: [laughs] – and this time it just went off, going oh! Oh! It was raining so hard! That was, I think that was the strongest I've been in, it was about 70 knots.

S: wow

C: Yeah, and then there was another one in Fiji.

S: What happened to the boat?

C: She's fine – you know it was just–

S: Were you on the boat?

C: Uh huh yeah, and the winds were about 70 knots and rain, rain, lot of rain, heavy rain.

S: The boat just rocked back and forth–

C: It wasn't – because we were just going back and forth in this little coordinate. Because we knew we were offshore so far. According to the radar. Of course, we couldn't see on the radar any more, but we had GPS plotted it. And so, we knew if we stay in the coordinates it would be ok. But that was the only way you couldn't see a thing. It was just (whistles) solid rain. But I can't imagine what some people have gone through I have friends who went through the cyclone in Raratea, in the Tahiti area, and it was I mean the boats were on a stands, it was in dry dock kind of? Not dry dock – and they just went dododooo – just the domino effect, clear down and wiped out so many of the boats and boats were up on the shore. And I mean that's something you know sailors always have to be vigilant, because you hear something at night you know is the anchor dragging, is the wind coming up you can hear and I'm pretty conscious, you know, coming out of dead asleep just going what's that sound or...

9:24

S: You were going to say something about another storm in Fiji

C: Oh yeah – we had to get out of an area we knew one was coming - a cyclone – and everybody had went up the river. We have a deep draft boat, we have a big keel, but –

S: What does that mean you have a deep draft boat?

C: We draw about 8 feet. So, you, you, know once you've gone into seven you're in the mud. [Laughs.] So, we had to get into a different area. And we set out about five anchors because we're 30 tons, if we start swinging around at an anchorage you'd be– if there were a fiberglass boat next to us you'd be in trouble. So, we just got ourselves behind an island, and it didn't come

- I can't remember if it came very close or not. But I don't remember, you know, getting the same kind of- we didn't have the same kind of 70 knot winds or anything. So, it must've gone around. But you have to take these cyclone warnings very serious, you know, when they're coming you can't just... You know there was another one in um-

10:32

C: New Caledonia, that was sitting on the top of it. And we were heading to New Caledonia, and everyone's going up. And we finally got to Noumea, and everyone's going up and down the dock going, well what are we going to do what are we going to do? Well they have this system where they take this long line and you hook it to the dock behind you, and I go well, has anybody done that yet? I mean how many divers are there in the marina that can take that line to the other side? And they go "oh two". And I go, "well, how many boats are here and how long is it going to take and when is the cyclone coming?" So, Steve and I decided we're just going to go ahead and do it. Maybe it's insurance that it won't happen right? So, you pay the guy, so but it was great, because we got all this line together and had em do it. And it didn't happen. But you know it's kind of an adventure. If you get hit with cyclone. They had been hit by cyclone in March and a lot of the boats had been moved over to another bay where they had the docks for the big ships, with one of the big cargo ships broke and took out 27 yachts. So. I mean not that I'm saying we've been lucky, it's true. But the oceans, she can be just glassy, like a lake, it's unbelievable, or she can be just [pause] raging! [Laughs.]

12:05

C: I mean coming up we've come up along the coast of New Zealand and had pretty four or five meter seas? Five meters? Let's see five meter seas, 70 knot winds, that was my scariest I think.

S: What happened?

C: Oh, the waves were breaking over the back of the boat, and I think the thing that made me afraid was we had autopilot which just steers the boat automatically, but I was afraid I'd have to take the helm, if the autopilot. So, it had me kind of in this scare zone when it was at night and on my own watch, and that's what scared me was that I'd have to really steer and not like, what if I had to steer and I broached the boat? You know? And I'm sometimes, I'm not really good when I'm steering at night, because you can't really see because you get like a little disoriented. And you have to sit there and look at your compass, basically, unless you find a star but if there's a storm you don't have any stars to look at you have nothing.

13:13

C: In the horizon, so you're kind of dependent on your compass to keep a course and feeling the wind. And as you know, if you're in our cockpit the way it is you don't feel the wind up there, but you want to stay out of the storm. So, I think it was a combination of those different factors that make it scary, and my lack of experience in that kind of situation. But I mean the boat was - she was fine - I never worried that the boat wouldn't make it - it was me laughs - you know, at the helm.

S: It's kind a hard experience to prepare for in regular life.

C: You can't prepare for it. Other than experience. And then how do you get experience in those unless you go directly out in one on purpose and who wants to do that?

S: Does it make you feel like you can approach different other situations in your life outside of sailing with different resources or -

[Tr. 9]

C: Yeah. It does. Because when you're sailing you're kind of at the mercy of the ocean huh? When you're on land you're kind of in control - you're either in your car or you're walking, or

you're – you don't have the land moving on you and shifting, and accelerating, and [laughs] blowing you over! You know – you do have a lot of control on land. Laughs yeah it's – sailing is really challenging. I think that's what men really like about it, I'm not saying that women don't like it too but the draw that has gotten men to these dreams like of getting out there and sailing like they think Steve is like 'God Steve you're our mentor to get out there and just do it.' And I think I've heard more men that want to go to sea than women.

S: And a lot of people consider Steve their mentor?

C: Well not their mentor so much as – maybe their mentor of that he's a Johnny Appleseed, in that he goes hey if you want to do it just go out and do it.

S: What do you mean just go do it?

C: Just go do it! And they admire him because he just does it.

S: Do you imagine that you'll keep sailing like, ad infinitum, to the end of your days?

C: I think – I don't know yet. I like it the way it is right now, that we take off – I don't know if I'd want to do it all the time. It's - like I talked to you before about my dad – my parents are getting older. So, I'd like to spend more time you know. I don't want to be long away long periods so much anymore.

S: Could you imagine stopping sailing entirely?

2:00

C: Oh, I guess I could imagine it. Do I want to do it? I don't know. It's become such a part.

Hmm. That's a very good question.

Tr. 10

C: I kind of like both. You know. I like both.

S: You like to live on land and also sail. If there was any place outside of the South Pacific that you could go where would it be?

C: Europe.

S: Where?

C: I thought it might be kind of fun just to sail into Venice. Laughs. Because I love Italy. And I loved Venice. Although I know the Med has certain trips to it you know, it's expensive, you have certain winds or you have no winds. Um. I think it's just that everything is so old there. You know it's so much history. You know, I love Polynesia and I love the Polynesian group of people because they're friendly and warm. But they don't have architecture. They don't have that kind of history. And I like his – I really like architecture, I loved Europe when I was there. So. Let's see, maybe it would be fun to sail in Greece maybe. Maybe go into Turkey. I heard Turkey's pretty fun. We have friends who are there right now I guess we could have gone to visit them see how it was.

1:25

S: Now when you came to get us where did you come from, where? I thought you were New Zealanders and you were coming from New Zealand to pick us up.

C: We did come from New Zealand. We sailed it from New Zealand. Made a pit stop at Minerva Reef. And then went up to Fiji. Sailed in Fiji for awhile in the Uwosawas and then off to Vanuatu and that's where we met you.

S: How long did the total trip take to get here?

1:57

C: About 14 days. Cause it took about – maybe 15, let's see. About fifteen maybe - twelve – because we stopped in Minerva maybe three days – I'm not always good at remembering

everything but I think that's what it was. Cause it's a long - fairly long passage from Fiji up to Tonga and stuff.

2:30

S: And so, I just want to reiterate, and this is my last question, how did you get roped into doing this for us? How did you find – how did – how did we end up on your boat exactly?

C: Well, we've always wanted to do kind of unusual adventures, and we put that out in the universe. And we were talking to Nancy and she said you know I want you to meet somebody. And so, we went to dinner.

S: Nancy?

C: Griffith. And we went down to her house in Napo'opo'o and there was Mimi and she had this video and on the video was the people of Taumako and they were falling these trees and making these canoes and we looked at each other and we were just "wow that's really cool" wow really we're thinking wow, look at this opportunity. This might be really cool to do this.

Again, Steve was so involved in the canoes in the past. And both of us wanting to do something cool, like, you know getting way out there. That's how it happened.

S: Meaning it happened because you went with Nancy to meet Mimi. Mimi showed you the video. But she also I mean, she said just come on over, I mean what did she say?

C: Oh, Nancy said I want you to come over and meet this lady – she just wants to talk to you about something to see if you're interested.

S: And she wanted to talk to you about –

C: The project. Yeah.

S: and when was that?

4:31

C: Oh, before we left on the trip. February, I think. January. January. Because we left in March. And then we didn't know if we'd do it or not.

[Tr.11]

There was a couple of variables. How many people on the boat, where could we get potable water, you know, because we would have to be able to continue on. Everybody would leave the boat and go back to normal and we were the ones who would have to go where do we get our water and provision and malaria issue. There were several things to consider like that.

And then we said don't be chicken let's go for it. Just get malaria pills. And that's when we started to solidify everything in the e-mail and said hey, ok.

But it was a little vague there for awhile, you must admit, through the e-mails like, so how many people are there? What's the schedule? Can we do that? Can we get over there in time? We knew we'd have to rush, push our trip through Fiji a little faster we'd have to put like do a pit stop in Vanuatu not even stop you know, and now, you know, we're doing it. [Laughs.]

1:15

S: Like a miracle. Oh my god.

C: It happened. And I think we basically asked for it. Don't we all?

S: We definitely did.

C: I think we all ask for these adventures in our lives and then they show up and we go, well here it is. Do you want to do it? [Laughs] Ok

S: There's your life on a silver platter. Are you hungry?

C: laughs. That's right! Take a bite you might like it!

S: True. Well thank you Cheryl.

C: You're welcome

S: There's other things I'm sure we could have talked about but that was great.

End