

Interview with Cheryl, 2015  
On board the Gershon 2, Australia

Stephanie: Well, so this- the piece I'm doing is about blue water sailing. And so that's why you guys are the stars of the show

[Cheryl & Stephanie laugh]

S: I was saying, I was telling Terry that when we went to the Solomon's, I was just was so amazed by your guys' stories, and also just by your life on the boat. And so, it was- I also felt kind of pulled in a way, doing the Story of Lata story, because I thought 'wow, this is a story.' And so for me, this a huge departure from all of the Outer Voices stuff I've ever done.

Actually, I'm going to switch my mic to mono, because it's just you I'm talking to.

S: Yeah, I mean, so I'm really interested to hear about your- sailing in general, but I particularly wanted to talk to you, and get your- a little slice of your life in a way. So I thought one way to do that would be, if you wanted to describe the passage that you just did between New Zealand and here.

Cheryl: Okay

S: And I don't know, that feels like too big of a thing to start with.

C: No, um. The passage, leaving - are you ready?

S: Yeah I'm ready when you are. It's not like we're live or anything.

C: Yeah I know

S: So you can say something, and then say it again, that's the good thing.

C: Yeah. Cause you'll be editing it. Our passage from Wanganui, New Zealand.

[thudding sound]

S: As long as I don't break my equipment first [Cheryl laughs]

S: Okay, go ahead.

C: From Manganui, New Zealand, up over to Australia, was more challenging than our regular cruising life. Because we now took on a project of escorting the Hokule'a. So it was, it was fun. It was fun and challenging, because you were actually chasing a canoe. Or during rough times when they couldn't point into the wind and they had to go that direction, we had to tell them. Or if there was no wind at all. Which that only happened for a short period. And being a sail boat, we rock, even with sails up we had to kinda circle around and come back. It was a photo opportunity [laughs]. But to be part of that experience with them, you know, was the opportunity of a life time, you never get. And we're always open to opportunities being cruisers you know [laughs]. So, we've seen a lot, but we've never seen the world past Australia. And so this was a great time for us to go beyond and go around the world. And for me to go, and be bringing the canoe past the statue of Liberty is going to be awesome [laughs]. So, we knew it's gonna be, you know Steve said like, it's a job. You have to look at it like you're.. It's fun but it is a job, because you have to be constant vigilant on it. You can lose a canoe. If all of a sudden the wind picks up, and you're like 'oh, they're gone.' You keep an eye on them most of the time. It's times when there was fog, you know, which is unusual-

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C: On the water, to have fog on the... You go, you know 'what is this stuff'? On this voyage, there were a lot of different conditions. For one guy who we had onboard, who hasn't done much sailing at all, he was kind of like: 'wow, this is cool, wow this is different.' And that's the thing about sailing, you just get all different kinds - as you go through the different squalls, you know

lots of rain, lots of wind, and you're just like 'hey God.' And you look back and the canoe is just being pounded, and they have no protection like we are. We're like on the cruise ship compared to what they're going through [laughs]. So, I have quite a lot of empathy for what they're doing. In fact, I really respect them. I think they're very brave to be out here. Of course, my friends they say they live vicariously through me, because they think I'm so brave. And for me, I just kinda – passages are just kinda something you just take on. And you just, you know you get through them.

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C: Um, what did Terry say – the agonizing and the ecstasy. It's agonizing to be a little seasick, as you know. And it kinda effects your attitude, and you just go 'why am I here? Why am I doing this?' [laughs] And you go, 'look at the sunset, that's why I'm here. And look at the ocean now.' And you know, I do love the ocean, a lot. I mean you have to – to be out here sailing. But I've done it now for 20 years, and it was fun to see somebody new.

S: What do you mean?

C: For a change. Uh, Bill, who was on board, he was new to it. And he was so excited, and I go 'Oh, I guess that's the way I used to be.' Now I'm a little jaded [laughs]. I've been on, for years. I think the passage itself was a little rough, and some of the times it was a little easy. Um, cause of the winds. The Tasman can have these big rollers. You know, they can be anywhere from 15-20 feet high. And that's -

S: What's the Tasman?

C: The Tasman Sea is between New Zealand and Australia. So, she can be pretty gnarly. We were pretty lucky we didn't get any stronger winds than we did. Because towing a canoe is a whole different ball park, you know. Or keeping up with them. So, does that kinda give you an idea?

S: Totally yeah

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C: Ok

S: But so, I just want to ask you for some details. See if he needs anything from you first.

C: No, Bob's covered.

S: Ok. Can you describe to me, well tell me what a passage is?

C: Well, going from New Zealand to Australia, crossing the ocean. Um, those are considered your longer passages. That was a 12 day passage. I mean it could be longer if you get no wind, and you decide you want to just sail. In their case they were trying, but it wasn't happening, so they finally just said hook us up, tow us. So, we did, and then we caught some more wind and it was good.

C: That's Susie, I can't believe it. I can't believe it. Can you stop this for just a minute?

S: Yeah, yeah sure.

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