

OCEAN
ADVENTURE

by Don McIntyre

Lazy Days, a \$US1 bargain, complete with windvane and a cruising pedigree. Another case of not wanting to go forward, or back, so just get off and fly home!

Pots of **GOLD**

Having realised their cruising dreams, some adventurers simply walk away and leave a bargain

It is always fun cruising the pages of *Trade-a-Boat* — the *Book of Dreams* — and reading about sailing adventures. But it's also a chance to grab a deal and start your adventure, too.

Many people cruising the trade-wind route get a big surprise (possibly shock) when they finally arrive at the end of a long downwind voyage. Looking back over their shoulder, they realise they have some serious headwinds to contend with to get home. NOT fun. They don't want to go forward, so they instead get off their boat and just fly home.

Friends I know have grabbed some real deals like this. You

can find them in Darwin and Cairns. In the Philippines, there were some absolute bargains. Sure they need work, but even that can be an adventure.

In Palau there were a few dumped boats. It rains a lot here, so they go mouldy real quick and can even start growing trees. But one, *Lazy Days*, had all the gear, a seized motor and recently sold for just one US dollar.

NO MORE MOWERS

A full life is all about the experiences you have, NOT the things you have, right? True, but sometimes the more things you have, the more unique the experiences can be.

I strongly believe you owe it to yourself to be yourself and experience life. Some people may perceive that as being selfish, but sometimes I see that as a tinge of jealousy. You could say I have owned a lot of toys in my life (I still have quite an arsenal of boats, planes, cars, and so on), but global warming and my carbon footprint have really made me consider many issues of late, not to mention the cost.

For many cruising people and those chasing adventure, the humble lawnmower (or not owning one) is the symbol of freedom. I don't own one anymore. I hope not to for some time.



The crew "off watch" on *ICE*, mid-Pacific (left). Young and carefree, they do not own a lawnmower yet and bury themselves in computers, watching movies at every opportunity, instead. When you least expect it, a nice sailfish (above) jumps on. The fishing is good!

just be following me, you are wrong. She is a leader as most can see. Thanks, Ted!

WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT

Venturing into the unknown has a certain thrill. If your adventures include a boat, you can expect anything at any time. I am happy to be at sea again, living onboard *ICE*, (one of our Top 10 Passagemakers this issue), headed for Tonga.

Surprises and first-time experiences have been constant. Sailing through the Philippines islands one dark night, I witnessed what I thought was some flying phosphorescence.

During the talikserbountyboat.com voyage last year, the phosphorescence was so thick one night, we could dip in the water and pick it up on our fingers, then place the glowing bits on our face like makeup! Cool. But never flying.

So what was this on *ICE*? Then one dropped on deck. It was a firefly. Little flies, with strobe-light bums, were flying around the boat, blown offshore with

So where is that leading me? Well, at 56, I guess I am preparing for retirement. Life to date has been full of adventure and challenge. I hope to be active for the next 20 years, so I've done a stocktake of assets and my life. If all goes well and if I make it to 76, life should still be comfortable, but simple thereafter.

Between now and then, I am trading down the things in return for more experiences. I don't want to go without now, just to have heaps of dollars at 76, then wonder why I didn't do all those other things earlier. Believe me, I see it so often with the "if only" set. I consider myself lucky in good health compared to many, so time to keep living life.

Why? Well, all my life I have tried to make decisions based on having no regrets and it

seems to have worked. Well sort of. Unfortunately, I have become another statistic. Yes, one of the 50 per cent that gets divorced.

Two-years ago, after 24 years of fun, Margie and I decided we should run separate lives, so like everything else we had done so well together over the years, we just did it. No real drama, just agreed on everything and now we are still the very best of mates, each with new beginnings.

Every adventure is much more fun shared. I have been so lucky to have done that and more with Margie. I often said that together we were able to achieve so much more than two individuals. My life was full with Margie beside me, so to all those who have followed our adventurous exploits over the years and thought she may

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VENTURING INTO THE UNKNOWN HAS A CERTAIN THRILL. IF YOUR ADVENTURES INCLUDE A BOAT, YOU CAN EXPECT ANYTHING AT ANY TIME”



It rains a lot in tropical Palau: all this vegetation grew naturally on a long-dumped boat. A green fingers special!

the breeze. I had never seen them before. We caught some and kept them in the pilothouse for a few days. No batteries needed. Amazing.

Another night, paddling back to the boat in a kayak, I saw on the surface what looked like glowing sea snakes, covered in phosphorescence, about 20 of them. Wow. But no, when I put my torch on these 60cm “snakes” they turned out to be buzzing little 2cm worms, spinning around and somehow generating long, intense and tight phosphorescent tails. Truly spectacular. They just held there, looking like snakes. I still don't know what they were.

Arriving in Palau, a few weeks ago on *ICE*, when you least expect it, the crew shouted “the engine room is full of smoke.” And it was. Thick, too.

All those times I had thought over the years, “what if?” Well

this time it was not fun. The generator was cooking itself. Some quick thinking and fast action saved what could have been a disastrous situation. (You can read the details on the www.bluetreasure.me blog).

When you have been adventuring for as long as I have, you learn that experiences, both good and bad, can happen anytime, usually when you least expect it. It is what makes you feel alive and gives you a full life.

Did I mention the fishing? A 2.5m sailfish; now that is living and it still is, too!

LONGEST/OLDEST CIRCUMNAVIGATION?

When Minoru Saito set off from Japan in 2008 onboard *Nicoloe BMW Shuten Dohji III*, he began his eighth solo circumnavigation. It was planned to take well under a year. As I write this, he is into

day 963, with 13.4 per cent of the total distance still to go. By the time you read this, he could be close to Japan and the end of an epic voyage that highlights what adventure can throw at you. (For the latest, see www.saito8blogspot.com).

In the past few months, I have met some real cruising characters, on all sorts of boats, quietly “doing their thing”. There are plenty who have been living aboard and circumnavigating in the same boat for more than 25 years. That really makes you think. They all seem very happy in a lifestyle that constantly delivers new countries, friends and experiences in a healthy way.

There is adventure to be had in all shapes and sizes out on the big blue. If you are young at heart, you can get into it now. If you are about to retire, you can, too, so why not think about it. I am, long and hard! 🍷