



The last flight of my Helicopter onto the Sea Shepherd's *Farley Mowat* in 2005. I sold it to them to fight the Japanese in Antarctica, which it did for the next six years in Whale Wars.

# LIVE LIFE LARGE

It feels good to be alive folks, it's cheap  
in some parts of the planet

**T**he meaning of life? It's a challenging question if you ever try to consider the issue. This is an adventure column and I often question what should be in it, or if it is relevant to the word adventure. I often write about what comes to mind in the hours before I start banging on the keyboard. Adventure is integral to my life. Often this column is about the photographs

anchoring the story. Sometimes I can do the whole thing in a few hours, at other times it will take a day. I enjoy the opportunity and feel honored that the editors have not yet pulled my page after nearly four years! Someone must be out there reading it? So thanks.

For me life is and should be an adventure and I think that gives me an open ticket on subject matter. We are all unique, with different

opinions, wants and ideas. We each see things in our own way, based on individual values and ideas that have formed as we grow. If you are reading this, the ocean is on your mind. I have had some of my best adventures around the sea and continue to do so.

A cruising life is a real adventure for those in it and it is fun to see the diverse ways people "do it". You see every type of boat and time frame.

For circumnavigators, there are generally three categories:

**Type 1: The hurry-up-and-get-it-over** boaters are those who follow Jimmy Cornell's route guide to a 12 or 18-month blast around the world. They only stop off at the major centers on the milk run to recover and prepare for the next leg. Then they are off again. One boat we met was six months out from Europe, across the Atlantic and Pacific to the Philippines!

**Type 2:** These are the **tea-and-coffee** set, who are far more refined, with a relaxed air about themselves. They are enjoying their new life at their own pace. They may have no fixed agenda, other than strictly following Jimmy and habitually inviting others over for a cuppa. They occasionally fish, have a modest tender with a little outboard and just sometimes can look a little bored!

**Type 3:** This category are the **players**. I like this lot. Life is the big dream itself and they are out there doing it. Everything on the boat is used and for a purpose. They have all the toys, or as many as they can jam onboard. They devour every anchorage and island, engaging the people and everything around them, looking for things to do and places to see, on, off and in the water. They have bigger tenders to carry the "things" and they are simply out there, prepared to change plans anytime, going where the next bit of life takes them. One day they "may" eventually tie the knot and complete the circumnavigation, but who cares.

## ADVENTURE OCEAN

All of them are having an amazing adventure and living a very full and stimulating life. None of them endure the regularity of whole-Saturdays reading the weekend papers, trying desperately to keep up with events of the world, but instead create their own world. They do not play solitaire on computers, have no cars and don't eat TV dinners and are generally fit and healthy. Their life is not better or worse than yours, but if you have a bucket list maybe you need to include in it the following item: **Spend time to consider YES/NO if the cruising life is for me.** It is not for everyone, but take my word for it, whatever way you take it you live life large.

## RISK ASSESMENT

While I was treasure hunting in the Philippines in 2003 onboard my ship *Sir Hubert Wilkins*, armed men tried to board us at anchor. They were



This German chap sailing solo on *EMMA* arrived in Tonga in the middle of a grand adventure circumnavigating. He pulled out an inflatable more than half the size of his home!

A grand adventure: seven of these vaka's (Polynesian open-ocean sailing canoes) have sailed all over the Pacific in the past few years. Two have been with the whales in Tonga the past two months (see [www.pacificvoyages.org](http://www.pacificvoyages.org)). They are looking for crew and all you need to qualify is "a BIG heart".



members of the New People's Army (NPA), a terrorist group. They had recently raided the island's police barracks, killing some and stealing many more weapons. They had also killed a corrupt local government member, dumping the body close to our shore compound.

We had found no treasure at that time so we were not of real interest, but nonetheless it was a delicate operation resisting them. Driving to town veggie shopping for the 20 people onboard took more than an hour, down a dirt tract and often we were harassed by them and local militia. I had to order all

future shopping trips to be made by helicopter to and from the ship to minimise risk. Expensive beans!

In 2009, when I arrived in the Philippines with *ICE*, I tried to help some people over a period with what ended up being a \$5000 loan. They did not repay as promised and when I started to seek recovery I soon gave up — the cost of a life there is about \$5000. That is all you need to pay that "guy" down the back for a "hit". I didn't need the money back.

Now an old friend and designer of about 30 boats I built (including my solo around-the-world raceboat *Buttercup*), Joe Adams, has lost his

The *Betsy Ross* was bought for \$98,000 and then converted to the ultimate toy freighter for a private owner, now cruising the world. He put sails, wind generators, solar panels, a flying boat, hovercraft, shark cage, all the dive gear, RIBs, car and everything else onboard! Boats of all shapes and sizes hey. He was in Tonga on his way across the Pacific and bound for South Africa to dive with great whites.



### MYSTERIOUSLY, A BURGLAR ENTERED HIS HOME AND ENDED HIS LIFE, WITH A MACHETE, AT 82. HE WAS A NICE GUY AND AN INSPIRATIONAL, FORWARD-THINKING DESIGNER

life in the Philippines. He had lived there happily in retirement for the past 20 years, had a business interest there and was "apparently" involved in a court case trying to recover some bad debts. Mysteriously, a burglar entered his home and ended his life, with a machete, at 82. He was a nice guy and an inspirational, forward-thinking designer.

Now another friend may have been caught in a difficult situation. He transported his big, half-built yacht on a ship to the Philippines to undertake the final fit-out by skilled, cheap labor. It appears to have gone horribly wrong, completely out of control and now he may lose the lot, with crazy demands and no way of persuading it. He values his life.

When life is cheap, you need to be very careful about who you upset. Build that into anything you do in the Philippines and do not flash obvious wealth and you are fine. I like the Philippines. The people are truly beautiful, soft, humble and friendly, with family being the most important thing.

#### WANDERER

My chief mate Amit survived seven months onboard *ICE* and grew from the experience, saying it has changed his life. He wanted to get



Dropping Amit on his new ride to New Zealand... the first time he has seen it. No sails, interesting, and wow, they are big windows, great for looking at big waves you sometimes get south of Tonga!

to New Zealand, not Fiji where we are headed, so when a call came over the VHF radio network from a boat looking for crew to NZ, he jumped at the chance. He had to leave the next day.

We were a bit sad to lose him a few weeks early and we will all miss each other. He was fun! Surprisingly, after all my training on risk assessment he asked nothing about the boat, or crew, before agreeing to join! He saw the boat for the first time, when I took him to it in the Zodiac the next day. Hmm? I like to know what I am crossing oceans in and with whom before I agree to do it. But, as I said in the beginning, we are all different and that is the fun part... Life is an adventure! 🚩

#### [SHARKS!]

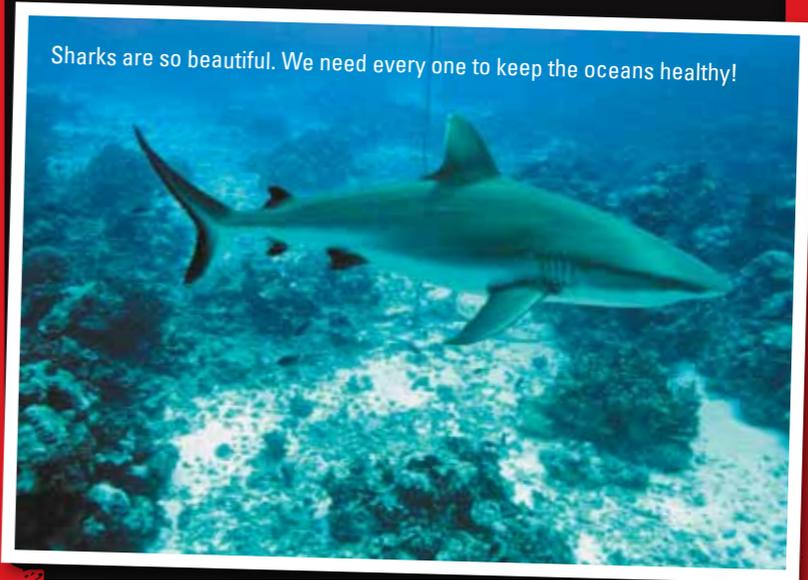
I am still on *ICE* in Tonga (see [www.bluetreasure.me](http://www.bluetreasure.me)), about to head to Fiji for the cyclone season. Just weeks ago, our free-diving crewmember Kylie Maguire was seriously bitten by a shark and had to be medivacked from Tonga to Queensland by CareFlight. She has now fully recovered and is back in the water smiling and loving sharks. "If anything, the shark bite was like some kind of initiation," she told me. "Now I am on a mission to help save the oceans."



Kylie fully recovered from "that" shark bite and now headed to Antarctica to protect whales from harpoons.

On *ICE*, we are all horrified that the Western Australian Government is to spend millions of dollars culling great white sharks, because five people were killed by sharks there this year. When one-third of all sharks species are threatened with extinction and not expected to survive past 2020, who can justify killing them, because we make a conscious decision to be in their environment surfing, swimming or diving? CRAZY! Here are the facts. Lightning is the problem NOT sharks! Globally "on average" each year, 10,000 people are killed by lightning, 6000 die in accidents while texting, 340 killed falling during a bath, 70 choke to death eating hot dogs, 13 are killed by vending machines and five are killed by sharks! So this year was just a bad year in WA. Now that State Government is also looking at setting up a shark-finning industry to supply Asians with a tasteless soup? ERRR!

Kylie has just signed on to crew with capt Paul Watson for four months, headed for Antarctica onboard the [www.seashepherd.org](http://www.seashepherd.org)'s secret new ship to defend whales from Japanese harpoons. She is excited about this new adventure. Just a few days ago capt Watson was awarded the Jules Verne Award, becoming only the second person after Jacques Cousteau to receive it. It was presented to him for "his extraordinary lifelong battle to defend and protect our oceans." If you feel passionate, and we all should, then support these amazing people.



Sharks are so beautiful. We need every one to keep the oceans healthy!