



# DIRECTION FINDER

Newsletter date: January 30, 2010

Special Edition

## SPECIAL EDITION "NATARAJA" 30 January, 2010 WHANGARURU HARBOR

The DIRECTION FINDER is published by the US Coast Guard Auxiliary, South Lake Tahoe CA. Flotilla 11-04. Submission of articles or subjects of interest, including photographs are welcomed and encouraged.

The editor reserves the right to make changes without altering the intended content. All submissions should be directed to the editor:

Victor Beelik Po box 10514  
Zephyr Cove, NV 89448  
Email: vbeelik@charter.net

The information contained in this publication is subject to

**Date: Saturday, January 30, 2010, 1:13 AM 30 January 2010  
Picnic Bay,  
Whangaruru Harbor  
35 21.64 S / 174 21.37 E**

**Our stop in Opuia was not the "in & out" one we had hoped for. The showers went well, laundry went well, dropping trash and recycling went well. The internet was touch and go, the air filter took three days and we still did not get the right one. Mr. Know-It-All on the phone refused to believe us that the Beta 38, which is the engine we have, is quite different from the Beta 28 and that the air filter is definitely not the same one. So, no new air-filter for us. Maybe somewhere down the coast will have one.**

**We also got the info on our visa extensions. Contrary to what we were told when we checked in to NZ, the Immigration Office in Auckland does not want to see us. Instead we had to download the 20 page application, the 16 page instruction**

booklet, then struggle thru the website to find the proper fee and where to send it all. I finally confused myself enough that I called the toll free number and spoke to Jane who was incredibly helpful and answered all my questions.

Now all we needed to do was find a chemist to take passport photos, find an address to have the extension sent to and get a hold of our recent bank statement to show that we would not be burden for the next three months.

OK, we got as much done as we possibly could and decided it was time to bug out of Opua. But first we wanted to top off the diesel tank since we haven't gotten any since Tonga. The water tanks needed some loving too. We weighed anchor and headed to the fuel dock. The debit card would not work and the marina office wanted us to pay a fee to run the card thru at the office. There was no way I was going to pay a fee for that so we topped off the water, which is free then headed over to Russell. We anchored off the wharf and Eric made two runs with the diesel jerry cans and we weighed anchor, crossed the channel and anchored off Paihia for a food run and passport photos. Mission accomplished. The swell picked up while we were ashore and it was brutal getting the groceries on the boat without losing anything over the side. Once again we weighed anchor (that is three times in a

matter of hours using the manual windlass with my still tender shoulder), headed back across the channel and anchored behind a little point near the Russell Cruising Club. Four anchorages in one day but all missions accomplished. A stiff drink was in order! The swell was still pretty lumpy in the Bay of Islands the next morning and a strong west wind was forecast. We unrolled the jib and had a nice sail out to the islands. We sailed along with numerous race boats of all shapes and sizes that came together in the islands for race week. There were some rather impressive multi-hulls and even some average Joe's out in there little boats all competing and having a great time. We were a little embarrassed with our very dirty bottom, dinghy in tow, main cover still on, tattered American flag (we have a new one, but why put it up while there is still life in this one) and all our cruising crap hanging off the transom, but we made sure the trim was perfect on our one sail and we looked as good as we possibly could. At least we weren't motoring! We were headed to Pipi Bay on Moturua Island to get some pipi clams but opted to pass it by because it was packed to the gills with boats.

Nevada Cove (our self named bay) was around the corner and headed there. We were dismayed to find a power boat in our spot but chose a spot nearby. The anchor caught then popped loose when Eric backed down hard. No surprise, we had trouble here before. I hauled the anchor up and called to Eric to come and see why it didn't set. On the point of the mighty CQR there was a big clam shell. When Eric had applied RPM's the anchor had dragged across the bottom because of the clam shell but hooked on something then popped. It had hooked on a clump of kelp, which was still attached to the shank of the anchor along with a big hunk of rock that probably weighed about 10 lbs. And here is poor little me with my still tender shoulder having to haul up the anchor and then find the extra weight, I mean really can a girl get a break here? We had better luck on the second try and got a good bite that held after Eric backed down really hard for longer than usual. Then the dolphins came. We got in the dinghy and headed out to get a closer look. There was a power boat and another dinghy that we joined. There were actually three or

four pods working the straight between the two islands. Our outboard is a 1979 Evanrude 2-stroke 4-horse. Our four horses are more like plow horses on their way to the glue factory and we were no match for the bigger engines or the dolphins. We just could not keep up and finally gave up and decided to head back to the boat. Then a pod was coming our way so we turned to parallel their track. They came whipping up next to us, seriously close and two of them came flying out of the water within a foot of the dinghy! I couldn't help but let out a scream. It was so amazing! Our dinghy is 10.4' long and these guys were quite a bit bigger. So cool! And then they were gone.

We spent the day on the boat reading and recovering from the past few days. I went down below to fix some lunch and when I returned topsides, the place was packed. Where did all these boats come from?

Then the wind picked up and blew like snot. The powerboat in front and to port of us went dragging by.

The owners were on shore but saw their boat relocating herself and made a fast return to gain control before anything bad happened. For the record, there was a big clam shell on his anchor when he hauled it up. The sailboat behind us and to port started dragging as did the guy that anchored right behind us. Now that is how you clear out an anchorage! The next day we took the trail around the island. We had done this one before, but wanted to stretch our legs.

On the one beach we spotted a pair of oyster catchers with three juvenile chicks, too cool! The next morning, we weighed anchor, unrolled the jib and headed for Oke Bay. The wind was light but enough to move us along comfortably. Once settled in, we headed to shore and picked up the track at the head of the bay. It took us to a Maori cemetery. Here we met Patty, a Maori lady, who said "I detect an American accent" and asked where we were from. We said Nevada, Lake Tahoe area. She then told us her sister lived in Gardnerville (that is very close to Tahoe). We had one of those small world moments and then had a great visit with her. She told us about the Maori tribes in that particular area and some of the history. She confirmed that the track we were on went out on the peninsula then dropped down to the road. If we followed the road to the end, we'd find a small market where we could get an ice cream. The views were stunning and the ice cream even better! The little "market" was near a launch ramp and a camp ground.

The sign outside read "Petrol, Diesel, oil, ice cream, ice cold drinks, bait. That is all we sell." We told the lady that we were glad she had ice cream and that we had walked a long way for it. She said we looked like we deserved an ice cream then asked where we had walked from. I told her Oke Bay then asked if I had pronounced it correctly. She said I had but that it wasn't a Maori word. It came from some ship captain. I answered "oh, good ol' Capt. Oakie". She said, "yea, he must have been an Oakie from Muskogee". We all got a laugh from that.

The next day we tackled the track in the other direction. This one went up to the ridge line and if you followed it for eight hours, you would end up at the Cape Brett Lighthouse. We did not have quite that much ambition and made our goal the shiny tin roof on the highest peak overlooking the anchorage. Of course the going was rough and very much uphill, but we were there before we knew it and decided to press on. There were supposed to be a couple of other intersecting trails that came up from Whangamumu

Harbor and we wanted to make sure they actually did so we could do the hike from that side when we were anchored over there. We found both of them and then headed back. The weather forecast was looking kinda funky. Winds were supposed to be easterly so we skipped Deep Water Cove and the track to Cape Brett.

We were going to go there next to do the shorter track to the lighthouse but figured we could sail by it and call it a day. On the way around Cape Brett, we also got to see the infamous "hole in the wall" which is an arch thru an island off the cape. The go fast tour boats take tourists thru the hole. We nosed up as close as we dared but decided our mast was probably too tall to make it thru so we just took a peak then moved on.

Eric spent time in Whangamumu Harbor when he was here as a kid and had fond memories of the old whaling station. He remembered a fresh water stream with a pipe where you could take a shower and was looking forward to visiting that again. There were a few boats already there, so we picked a nice spot smack in the middle of the bay. After lunch, we headed to shore to check out the whaling station. It was much as he remembered but we couldn't find the pipe. We followed the stream and found a small waterfall and a rusty pipe laying in the water. It was too cold to shower in anyway! We then followed a track that according to the map we had would lead us to the peninsula. It didn't. We found the off shoot that at one time went that way but it was overgrown to the point that we couldn't get thru, which says a lot! Oh well. The next morning we set off on the 5-hour loop trail and were treated to some fabulous views. We walked thru a grove of kauri trees. I spotted a funky bug on one tree. It looked like one of those stick bugs but it was green like a praying mantis. Eric decided to touch it and it leapt off the tree, landed on me, which of course made me scream like a girl and Eric laugh hysterically. Don't know what happened to the bug but we got a good laugh. After the kauri grove we topped the ridge and met up with the trail we had scoped out a couple of days ago. We continued on and then followed the trail down to Te Toroa Bay and had lunch on the beach while an ugly naked guy frolicked in the surf.

After lunch we followed the trail up the hill and finally made the next ridge line then dropped back down into Whangamumu. Excellent day!

But, then we realized that the swell was now rolling into the anchorage and NATARAJA was rolling beam to beam. Once we got back on board, we weighed anchor and tucked into the south side of the bay and got relief from the swell.

The next morning we decided to move on down the coast to Whangaruru Harbor where we would get better protection from the forecasted swell and strong winds. The trip was only about 12 miles but it was nasty with the wind blowing hard from the SE. Inside Whangaruru Harbor, we found a nice spot off Picnic Beach where we would get good protection from both wind and swell. The next day we headed ashore and followed the road towards the isthmus between Sandy Bay in the harbor and Bland Bay on the ocean side. We found an honor system veggie stand where we were able to pick up some lettuce, cucumbers and half a watermelon.

These little stands are great. Local farmers set them up and all the stuff is marked with the cost. This particular one had a box with a slot in the top to put the money and dish with coins to make change.

We stopped in at one of the campgrounds and were able to buy a loaf of bread. A very productive walk.

Before heading back to the boat, we collected a bucket of oysters to have as a snack.

Today we did a great loop track that took us up the ridge line and out to the peninsula with a side trip down to Ocean Beach. The trail ended at a campground where we stopped to chat with the camp host. We had hoped that maybe she had a trail brochure since it was a Department of Conservation campground, but she said that the DOC had stopped distributing them. We talked about the Pakete, which is a brown teal duck and is endangered. We had actually seen a pair in a little stream near the campground. She said that the kiwi birds come out into the campground area at night when no one is around but since people were there we probably wouldn't see any. Oh well.

The wind is supposed to stay strong from the SE to the E and a sizeable swell is forecast thru at least Tuesday.

Tomorrow, we may poke our nose around and check out a different anchorage. The protection from the wind will be good, it's the swell that will determine if we stay or return here. But, we do need to get moving and get to Tutukaka sooner than later so we can get online and print out our bank statement and get our visa application in the mail.

Until next time, this is e&E aboard NATARAJA, the little yellow boat from Nevada, rockin' & rollin' in the big swell.....



