"Fair Winds"

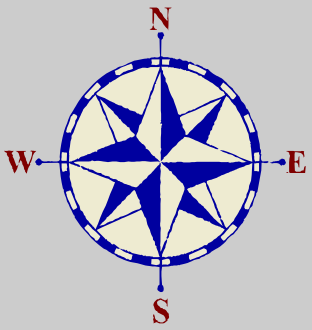
No. 7

Dedicated to Mr. Sidney A. Rosen 1919-2000

The Newsletter of the American Vega Association

Cover Girl "Malubia"

In This Issue:



Opening Shot

By Chuck Rose

I have never been one for New Year resolutions but I do take time at the beginning of each new year to re-evaluate and set new goals for myself. In hopes that I can improve, physically, mentally, spiritually and financially. Steven Covey defines a goal as "A dream with a deadline" and with that in mind I've set some deadlines for my dreams. Here are some that will have impact on you; Mar 5th, April 30th, June 30th, August 31st, October 31st and December 31st. These are the "In-the-mail" deadlines for this and the next five issues of Fair Winds.

This issue features the final installment of **Preparing Your Vega for Offshore Cruising,** the details of how Nick and Jenny Coghlan prepared their Vega, **Tarka the Otter** for their circumnavigation . Nick and Jenny circled the globe in a basically stock Vega with only minimal changes. Beginning in the next issue, We will be running a multi-part feature on **Lorna Doone**, another world girdling Vega meticulously refitted by **Tony Skidmore** now owned by **Gene** and **Trish Suess**. I have lots of photos of Lorna Doone from the Rendezvous at Pender Island and Tony provided more photos plus diagrams maps and more along with his article. Tony is an accomplished writer and I'm sure you'll enjoy this series covering the voyages of Lorna Doone.

Caption this photo and win your choice of either one year free membership or a free CD *(See page 15)*

Contributions

You may submit contributions via e-mail by sending text or graphics to:
Vega1860@netscape.net

Manuscripts, photos or drawings may be sent via conventional mail to:
SV Lealea
PO Box 88784
Honolulu, HI 96830-87874

Contributions submitted via snail mail will be returned only if accompanied by a self addressed stamped envelope

Lealea's New Frock

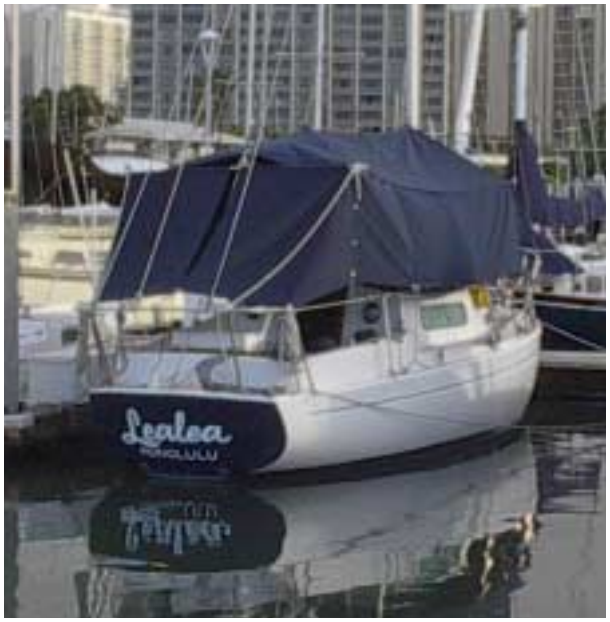
If there is one thing you can add to your Vega to improve the comfort of the crew while in port it is a good set of awnings. After twelve years of living aboard I can state, unequivocally, that this accessory is absolutely essential.

Well designed and well made awnings keep the sun and rain at bay, enhance privacy and effectively increase living space by making the cockpit available in all weather. There is nothing I enjoy more than sitting in the cockpit on a rainy morning with a cup of coffee and a good book, except maybe sitting the cockpit on a blazing sunny afternoon with an ice cold beer, under the protection of the awning.

With the awnings up we can leave the companionway and forward hatches open for ventilation at all times, rain or shine, with no worry of rain coming in or of passers by on the dock peering into our bedroom. Bree's box on the cabin top is private and dry and bicycles and other gear stored on deck when not in use are out of sight, protected from the elements and secure.

Lealea's awnings were made with roll-up panels on either side to allow easy boarding. These panels are secured with zippers and twist button fasteners so that we can enter or exit quickly using the zipper or we can roll up the panel and secure it with tabs and twist buttons. I have the awnings set up so that I can enter and walk around the cockpit on the seats standing erect (the boom has been removed and is lashed down on the side deck while in port). When sailing, the awnings go into the sail bags vacated by the mainsail and jib.

When I bought Lealea she came with a set of awnings which I replaced in 1992 at a cost of US$937. In 1997 they required repair and re-stitching which cost US$130. In December of 2001 the old awnings were again in need of re-stitching and patching so I asked Janice Dubois, an old friend and the seamstress who had made the awnings for me in 1992, to come over to the boat and have a look. She told me that she could re-stitch them again and that they would probably last another five years but I opted for a new set with some improvements and in a different color. The old awnings were of Royal Blue, the new ones (shown) are Navy.



The cost of the new awnings was US$904.80. This may seem expensive, but I consider it a good value. The awnings on Lealea survived ten years of tropic sun and winds gusting to over fifty knots on many occasions without complaint, requiring only re-stitching and some minor patching at chafe points after five years of continuous use. After ten years the fabric is still in good enough shape to re-stitch and, with a few patches, continue in service for another five years or be recycled into spray cloths, gear bags, covers, etc. I call that a good value indeed!

Richard M. Brauer
2049 Lake Shore Drive, Long Beach, Michigan City, Indiana 46360

Chuck Rose
SV Lealea
P.O. Box 88784
Honolulu, Hi., 96830-8784

Dear Chuck:

Enclosed is my check #6899 in the amount of $15.00. The extra $3.00 is to cover postage as I don't have a computer nor E mail. Thanks for all your good work, it is very much appreciated.

I don't know if you heard about Steve Wallace losing his Vega in a storm last fall on Lake Michigan. As I understand from Steve, he had been sailing solo north from Michigan City to Port Washington, Wisconsin. That is a distance of a little over 100 miles. When he arrived near Port Washington, the weather had deteriorated to the point that he did not want to sail into an unknown port at night with strong winds and 8-10 wave action. He proceeded north to Sheboygan which he though would be an easier port to enter in the morning. Unfortunately he fell asleep and found himself and his boat on a sand bar. The wind and waves were building and he could not get his boat free even with the help of a tug boat. He had to abandon his boat.

Steve was told, the next day, by the Coast Guard that the deck of his boat had washed ashore about 20 miles north from where his boat had sunk. As you may know he had spent over 2 years rebuilding his Vega including installing a new diesel engine from England. He has now purchased a Tartan 30 which he plans to rebuild.

I don't know if I'll get my boat back in the water this year. As soon as the weather breaks, I'll start on the project of totally refinishing the exterior of the boat.

Thank you for keeping all of us informed.

Dick Brauer

Sorry to hear about Steve's misfortune but thanks for letting us know; and thanks for being so prompt with your dues and for the extra contribution. I'll do my best to make sure you get your money's worth.

2 January 2002

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Vega no 7 IMARI

Chuck Rose
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USA

Dear Chuck,

I am sure that I owe you my membership fee, but I don't know if the missing fee is for 2001 or 2002 or both. Anyhow, please find $20 enclosed and use it as best you wish. And ,please, add a line next time with a hint if I am still at debt!

Not much work is done on my good old vega at this time of the year. We are having 10-15 centigrades of frost and half a meter of snow. However, my boat is well protected inside a temporary "house" with plastic sheeting over and all around all the way down to ground level which keeps the snow drifts away. I have just been down and given it a check and charged one of the batteries, that was getting low. I have some plans for interior fittings but the climate seems too forbidding at present.

Usually I would have been out on my skates re-visiting some of the anchorages I frequent during the summer but this winter has not been favourable for that: At first the autumn was mild, so no ice. Then we got a spell of frost and the lakes and the innermost part of the archipelago froze but immediately snow fell thickly on this thin ice, which stopped it from growing in thickness and also prevented skating. Fortunately I have my old pair of cross-country skies with which to entertain myself.

By the way: Congratulations to the vega meeting. It seems to have been a great success. Keep up your good work!

Happy New Year.

Lars

Yes Lars, you're paid up for 2002. Thanks for being prompt with your dues and **Mahalo nui loa** for the extra contribution! While I'm at it, special thanks for your article on reinforcing the mast step beam, now included in the manual and scheduled for publication in an upcoming issue of **Fair Winds**

Sistership

Maluhia, V3043, has been a neighbor of Lealea's since before I bought her in 1990. Although she has been close at hand for many years, I know very little about her. I can tell you that a previous owner, who lived aboard, installed a refrigerator and her current owner removed the engine and replaced it with an outboard. Her deck and cabin trunk were refinished a year or two ago. She is sailed frequently in Mamala Bay and was recently moved from the floating docks close to Lealea out to the transient berths on the 800 row of the Ala Wai Marina where these shots sere taken.

Maluhia's most striking feature is the massive bow roller and windlass arrangement shown below.

The Nav Station

Rendezvous 2002:
The plans are confirmed for the Pacific Northwest Vega Rendezvous on Aug 2,3&4, 2002, at Islander Lodge and Marina, Lopez Island, WA. We have reserved 10 dock spaces and the cost $1.00 per foot. We will have use of a room for potlucks, breakfasts, etc. There is a pool, hot tub, restaurant, etc. Web page is www.lopezislander.com, phone is 360-468-2233. We invite everyone to the rendezvous. Lopez Island is beautiful and the crabbing is great in Fisherman's Bay.
We had a great time last year and the first annual PNW Vega Rendezvous and hope to make this an annual event. Please RSVP asap if you are coming and would like dock space. You can also confirm your space with the Islander Lodge and Marina or let me know.
My email is skipperjs@yahoo.com.

Judy Schwan
AKVAVIT
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Archives on CD ROM:
Two noble **volunteers, Tom Barron** and **Adrian Dobrea,** are currently working on scanning a collection of the old **VODCA** Newsletters provided by **Dru Sheldon** so they can be published on CD ROM or on line. It is my understanding that the collection is nearly complete, going back as far as **1980** and includes some of Sidney Rosen's finest work. When this material becomes available will depend on the time available for the volunteers to work on the project. Watch this column for future developments.

Speaking of CDs, by the time you read this, I will have completed converting all of the later newsletters, those published after July 2000, into Adobe Acrobat pdf format and scanning and converting the one hundred eleven page **Vega Owners Maintenance and Repair Manual** as well as the issue from 1990 in which **Preparing Your Vega for Offshore Cruising** originally appeared, an additional twenty pages. **PLUS** ten more pages, submitted by **Lars Lemby,** with detailed instructions , including diagrams, on reinforcing the mast step support beam. That is an additional thirty pages added to the manual. Lars' article will be appearing in an upcoming issue, as soon as space is available. If you can't wait, see **page 15** for details on how to get a copy of the CD.
What? No computer you say? No problem says I. Just take the CD down to your local Kinko's Print Shop or similar service and have them print the whole thing, or any part of it, on paper for you. It should cost about ten cents a page for the black and white text. They will even bind it or print it on pre-punched three ring binder stock; in color even! Yes, that's right folks. All of the photos and artwork that have appeared in the seven issued I have published so far are in full, living color on the CD. Now what do you think of that? All told this collection amounts to about **two hundred and seventy pages!**

But wait! There's more even! The entire photo collection from the Rendezvous, only a fraction of which appeared in the newsletter, will be included on the CD and, of course, in color.

This solves a huge problem for the Association, namely, the cost of printing and mailing the manual to new members as each copy cost slightly over $15 to print and mail compared to about $5 for the manual on CD. In addition, the CD can contain much more material than just the 111 page manual thus adding value to the membership package.
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Memberships:
All memberships expire with the calendar year so a good many of you are due for renewal. I'm handling that a little differently this year. Those of you that have already renewed will find a little thank you note with this issue. If you don't find one, it's time to renew. If you think I've made a mistake, don't hesitate to contact me. Oh and please do use the membership form on the last page of the Newsletter so I can be certain to have up-to-date information.
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Preparing Your Vega for Offshore Cruising: Part 4

BILGE PUMPS

A backup for the regular bilge pump is desirable, and whilst you're installing it, you might as well put it where, if need be, you could pump from inside the cabin - i.e. on the starboards wall of the cockpit well, close to the instrument panel. We installed a Henderson Mark V, stuffing its intake down where the ordinary intake goes, and leading the outlet astern, inside the cockpit locker to a Y-junction in the starboard cockpit drainpipe.

WIND VANE

Volumes could and have been written on the subject of windvanes. We installed a NAVIK (made by Plastimo in France). This light is of a relatively simple design and powerful. Basically, we were pleased with it - we could hardly have been otherwise. It steered alone on all our major passages except one. However, a vane has it's limitations; it will not tolerate the amounts of weather or lee helm that a human will and it will not keep you on a dead run with as much as a sail up as you might have if you were hand steering. It takes many hundreds of miles before you begin to learn how to get the best out of your vane, but this vane never needs feeding, never complains, and never gets tired!

Weak points to look for on the NAVIK:

I have seen five or six NAVIKS on which the white paddle cracked horizontally, about one third of the way down. Anticipate this by putting on a preventative 'bandage' of three or four layers of fiberglass for two or three inches on either side of the rectangular hole in the paddle.

The jointed connector from the turret assembly to the paddle assembly likes to work its way off the paddle assembly at inconvenient times. You can restrain it with wire or twine.

A crucial weld on our vane failed where the large tube on the paddle assembly meets the white paddle itself. To remedy this, you need anew white paddle with trim tab, an appropriately sized piece of stainless steel (ss) tubing and welding gear for ss, all or some of which may not be available to you at the moment of crisis

For spares, take several jointed connectors, a supply of the appropriate Teflon washers, and (for when all else fails), a supply of surgical tubing which, you will find, is the one vital ingredient in all home-made self-steering devices.

Our 'Walker' trailing log has been excellent, and we long since ditched our unreliable, power-consuming electronic log which was anyway always being fouled by weeds. In four years we have lost three spinners to sharks, two of them on successive days. Oil the log as suggested and check regularly for weak points in the line. If you can find reverse-wound wire leader, that might eliminate the shark problem. (Wire which is conventionally wound soon kinks irretrievably.) You can actually do without a log quite easily. Offshore you soon learn to estimate your speed quite accurately, and anyway, the log does not take currents into count.

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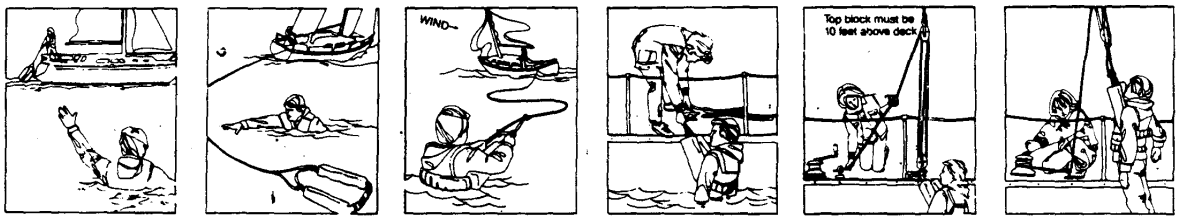
MAN - OVERBOARD GEAR

Most of your safety precautions and energy should be aimed at never falling overboard in the first place. Being offshore with only two of you on board, the chances of one finding the other, even in moderate conditions, are mighty slim indeed. However, we have a life ring tied to a MOB pole with 30 ‘of floating yellow line and a battery powered light which goes on when floating. The life ring has a self-deploying drogue with a whistle tied to it. The whole assembly is attached with a quick-release lashing to the stern pulpit. The flag on the MOB pole has a restraining sock over it. This is attached with a light line to the backstay so that it will pull off when the pole is deployed. Even supposing you locate your crew, you then face the formidable task of getting him/her back on board in a possibly comatose or helpless state. We have a homemade four-rung rope ladder (doubling as a swimming ladder) attached to the base of the stanchion closest to the sheet winch, but this assumes the victim is able to pull him/herself out of the water. For a more serious situation, we have a 4x1 block & tackle system with a snap-link to be attached to the end of the boom. The victim’s end has a rope strop of sufficient length to go around the victim’s chest & back and then back to the block with another snap-link. The two blocks and their line, etc should be carefully stowed so that when used, they are about six feet apart.

In an emergency, the topping lift should be rapidly put on and the boom raised a little. The end of the tackle with the single snaplink is attached to the end of the boom whilst, at the other end of the tackle, the strop is attached either to the victims harness or around his/her chest and then back to the outboard block. Using the block & tackle for vertical hauling and the mainsheet to keep the victim close to the boat, you should then be able to haul him/her aboard. Needless to say, you should practice this system in calm and warm water. The following advertisement is of a commercial system of the type described.

HOW LIFESLING WORKS



1.Stop boat immediately. *Maintain Visual Contact.* Deploy Lifesling.

2.Circle M.O.B. until contact is made.

3.Stop boat immediately. Drop Sails. M.O.B. puts Lifesling on *Do not tow victim.*

4.Pull M.O.B. slowly alongside boat.

5.Rig hoisting tackle Top block must be 10´ above deck.

6.Hoist M.O.B. aboard.

GOING UP THE MAST

For routine inspections of the upper rigging, we have a homemade rope ladder, which we haul up on the jib halyard. But you wouldn’t want to go up this at sea (actually you wouldn’t want to be going up there at all, but you should be prepared...) So, you need either mast steps which we didn’t have but which we would next time) or the means of hauling someone up. The Vega’s mast winch is out of the question, being far too small, so we made our 4X1 man-overboard block & tackle double up as a means of pulling someone up. You will need five times the height of the mast for this - say 150 ft. A Bosun‘s chair is easily fabricated from line and a piece of planking.

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LIFE JACKETS

We use ordinary lifejackets, but with a rigging knife, whistle and personal strobe light attached to each jacket. We make it a rule to always wear them in rough weather and always at night no matter how calm it may be.

EPIRB

An Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon sits in its' holder on the bulkhead at the aft end of the starboard bunk. I have some doubts over how useful this would be, as it is apparently pure chance whether or not satellites pick up its' message. The latest design of EPIRBs, the Class C, sounds a much better bet: it is targeted specifically at satellites, unlike the older versions.

RADIOS

For transmitting we have only a VHF. Obviously, this is of limited use offshore, but we do use it to warn approaching ships of our presence. In some of the more popular cruising locations (e.g. in Mexico) there are daily 'nets' on the VHF. We also have a compact Sony all-band receiver (#7600D) which is single sideband capable. This means, if we so desire, we can tune into ham nets, which often carry weather information. A loose clear bag permanently protects the VHF.

DEPTH SOUNDER

Useful when approaching an unfamiliar coast at night or in fog; also for assessing amount of anchor rode necessary. Ours is powered by its' own dry cell.

LIGHTING

By removing the bulb from one of the two principal cabin lights you can make a considerable dent in your own power consumption. Principally we use a gimballed brass kerosene light, mounted on the forward bulkhead of the starboard bunk. You need to take a couple of spare glass chimneys.

BATTERIES

If you keep them in the bilge, you must be very careful not to let them get covered by water. Once, in rough seas, we failed to notice that the un-taped hawse pipe cover had flipped off and we were taking water into the bilge. This soon resulted in the loss of the batteries. The hand-cranking feature on the engine suddenly became very useful. We also screwed a little wooden slat in place, across the aperture where you insert the batteries (under the cockpit sole). In the event of turning turtle you don't have to worry about your batteries falling out and making a hole in the roof or hurting someone. The battery acid could also burn you.

STOVE

Most offshore cruising boats use propane; its dangers are well known. But you should be aware that the fittings used in the US and Canada are not of the same dimensions as, for example, those used in the French possessions. Thus refilling bottles can be a problem. We used a two-burner kerosene stove with primus type burners and had no serious problems with it. Kerosene is universally available (but of variable quality, notably in Mexico) and is very cheap. Priming the stove in rough seas can be a problem: the answer is in a specially designed clamp on wick, which may take some finding and which we got from Thomas Foulkes Ltd (London).

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WATER TANKS

Offshore, calculate on using half a gallon per person per day. This means that with a crew of two, you have only fourteen days supply in the main tank. We installed flexible tanks by Plastimo under both bunks (capacity of 12 to 18 gallons each) but had repeated problems with poorly manufactured inner plastic bags. The simplest solution is to have a series of good five-gallon jerry jugs stowed in various locations. As a rule of thumb, we carried water for twice as long as we thought we would be at sea. This paid off when, three days out of Hawaii and with over 2000 miles to go to BC, we found the main tank had drained out into the bilge, via a very slowly leaking water pump. The Whale gushers are good but you will need to take spares and master the art of taking them apart from time to time. For treating suspect water, small quantities of bleach will do the trick.

ENGINE

Ah ... .the engine. Sixteen years old - our old VOLVO MD6A is still more or less working, so it can't be all-bad. Main problems were/are as follows:

Slow and difficult to start. Having the fuel below the engine and no electric fuel pump seems to encourage the fuel, if there is the slightest air leak in the system to back down out of the injector feed pipes. Usually I find its sufficient to flip up the decompression lever, unscrew one of the injector pipes where it meets the engine on top, and crank the engine until a steady pulse of fuel is coming out. If this fails, obviously you need to check back, probably redoing filter installation first of all.

Overheating: Soaking or boiling the thermostat in vinegar can be helpful, as can slightly enlarging the two small holes in the outer disc of the thermostat. Then check the impeller -you need to take it out to see if there are any cracks in the fan 'blades'. If all else fails, the tubes in your exhaust manifold are possibly clogged up and need cleaning out, but don't take the manifold off unless you have a spare gasket at hand.

Two failures in four years of alternator regulators (symptoms: either a total failure to charge the batteries, or the opposite, leading to rapid boiling-off of the electrolyte). Buy a spare regulator or two before you leave and, if it is the type clamped on the back of the alternator, rewire it so it can sit in the friendlier environment of the electrical compartment.

It is a good idea to use the decompression lever for starting and, in general do your best to conserve electrical power as you never know when you when you might need the engine in an emergency. With only the cabin lights, Nay lights and V1W.todrain the batteries, -we found no need for additional means of battery charging. It would, however, be easy to hook in solar panels (better than wind generators, which seem to need at least 15 knots to produce anything).

Maintenance: Change the oil when recommended i.e. at 50 hours. We changed the oil filter at 100, visually checked the CAV glass bowl filter for water at 50 and changed it at 100, the fuel filter on the engine at 150. It is difficult overseas to get appropriate grease for the reversing mechanism, so you should take a supply with you. Engine spares should include an injector, a spare thermostat, a pair of

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0-rings for the impeller shaft, impellers, the various filters (though local versions are nearly. always available), oil (not always easy to get the right grade), one each of the big gaskets, an appropriate variety of hose clamps and hose, and perhaps fuel and water pump rebuild kits, also, anything relevant to your own engine's idiosyncrasies.

NAVIGATION

Largely a matter of personal preference. We used only a sextant, albeit a good one (Freiberger, Yachtsman's three-quarter size), and the HO 249 tables, with no special calculator. Over 90 percent of cruising yachts now have Satnavs; however, in our view, their main snags are that they are a power drain and that if they fail you can't fix them. It is a fact of life that if you take a sextant as a backup to a Satnav (as you should) you simply will not keep your celestial skills (if you have already boned up on them) up to scratch

So, is a sextant sufficient? As long as you are prepared to maintain full night watches, never enter a harbour or close land at night (unless overriding safety considerations dictate that you must), then you will be fine. Don't worry too much about not seeing the sun or listening to people's stories about not seeing the sun for three weeks. If you're looking hard enough, all day, you'll have sufficient of a glimpse to get a line of position during the day. We've occasionally taken shots of the moon, once or twice of the stars, as confirmation of positions obtained from the sun. It's not usually necessary to do the stars (which is a slightly more complicated process). Nor do you need to be a math whiz: I have zero mathematical ability but can now compute a sun-sight, using no calculator, in 3 or 4 minutes, 'cookbook' fashion.

CHARTS

We keep our charts in plastic tubes or in large garbage bags under the bunk mattresses. Charts represent a large financial investment and we tried to send packages of them home whenever we could to reduce the risk of losing them to mildew, etc. (the same applies to books - you must constantly be thinking about keeping the Vega as light as possible.)

HEAD

We left the head installed but filled in the compartment with removable shelving. The conventional head would be unusable in a rough seaway - a bucket is altogether more practical and sanitary. Keep the bucket permanently tied on.

SLEEPING

With only two persons on board (and I think a Vega would be excessively cramped with more) you don't need restraining weather cloths to keep you in your bunk. Only one of you will be asleep at sea at any given time, so just sleep in the downhill bunk.

INSULATION

Not that you need any in the tropics, but the foam-backed vinyl with which the boat is lined seems to have a positive aversion to heat and soon starts peeling off messily and irretrievably, a problem that we now are facing up to, back here in B.C.

THE BOTTOM

The growth of barnacles and weeds is very fast in warm waters, but fortunately the Vega is small enough for me to be able to go in and scrub her bottom at frequent intervals without needing diving bottles. A

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wetsuit is still a good idea for, say, Californian waters. We have only hauled twice in four years and found that we did really not need to haul the boat the second time. We used a rubber type bottom paint by International (but be aware that many types of paints are not available in certain countries, and that the numbering and naming systems of large enterprises like International also seem to vary with each country - as does the quality of their paint).

In the trailing edge of the rudder we drilled a quarter inch hole, through which we would be able to thread a steering line in the event of rudder stock failure. Remember to paint your waterline high enough for your anticipated increased draught, and it's also a good idea to flare the waterline up at the bow and stem. As mentioned above, be weight conscious all the time; the Vega is a light boat and much of her seaworthiness resides in her lightness.

DINGHY

Given the lack of stowage space on deck, an inflatable is your only option. We had an 8 *ft* Achilles with no engine (more weight, more mechanical problems, more fuel.) and were well pleased with it. At sea we kept it in its' bag on the Vee berth. Frequent doses of Armor-All helps to keep it in good shape. Other popular brands amongst the cruising fraternity are Avon and, to a lesser extent, Zodiac. This latter one seems to have been having bonding problems, judging by the lineups we saw at Zodiac agents all around the world.

EMERGENCY BUCKET

Not a second head, but a large, seal able white bucket, with a lifejacket tied around it, which we could grab in the event of abandoning ship. We keep it in the deck level alcove amidships, forward of the head, jammed in place with a piece of a wooden slat. Contents areas follows:

- Assorted tins of fruit, condensed milk, Spam, Granola and oatmeal bars.
- Assorted flares, including one parachute flare There are more in the life raft and more still in our port aft cabin locker, behind the bunk.
- Signaling mirror
- Whistle, Matches
- 'Space' blanket, bailing sponge -~
- Fishing gear including large gaff hook
- Flashlight and separate batteries
- Pilot chart of the ocean being sailed, pencil & paper, pocket compass
- Heavy ss rigging knife (on top of everything else - to cut the raft free if necessary.
- First aid kit
- Small water supply, can opener, cup, spoons.

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Occasionally we verbally rehearse an abandon ship drill - Devise your own routine to ensure that the most valuable items come with you in the raft and that you don't waste valuable seconds thinking out priorities and deciding who'll do what. Other items we would need to grab are, in order: extra water, the EPIRB, a small ready prepared bundle of passports, US cash and credit cards, more flares, and then if time, extra food, the sextant, more water, etc.

DANGERS

What are the main dangers in offshore sailing? In our purely personal opinion, provided you're not sailing in extreme climates and avoiding cyclone seasons, the main danger is not the weather at all, but the risk of collision with a merchant ship. After that I'd put man overboard, followed by losing the boat through navigational errors or slackness. Weather comes fairly low down on the list, and most boats that get into trouble with the weather offshore seem to do so because they had not heeded a weather forecast, were sailing in the wrong area at the wrong time or were simply in too much of a hurry. Sailing a tight schedule is a fatal error. We didn't throw much heavy weather at 'Tarka'.

Basically, we sailed around the world via the Cape of Good Hope and never had consistent winds of over *35* knots - even then ours were in the right direction.

I do think the Vega, basically, can handle most situations as long as the crew can!

INVENTORY AND LOCATION LIST

We kept a spiral-ring notebook in which we recorded where spares and so on were located. One needs to keep this from Day One for it to be useful. Keep it up to date as you use or move things. It is surprisingly easy to lose track of what you actually have.

For each major provisioning, one of us would stow items while the other wrote down where the various items were being stored. To note down what you use each day is a very useful exercise on a passage. At the end of the passage, draw up a list of what you consumed. This may be quite different from what you had planned to consume and can be useful on future passages in estimating quantities of food to be purchased, etc.

We recorded the charts we owned on a large British Admiralty Catalogue. Even when your charts are not all B.A., you can indicate on the many (reference) maps in the catalogue what charts you own. As we entered each new geographical area (e.g. the Mexican coast, the Great Barrier Reef, etc.) we would get out the relevant charts, order them and number them on the outside so that we could clearly see what they were without having to unroll them halfway. The ten or twelve relevant charts would then be kept in a plastic chart tube, more accessible than the bulk of them, which remained under the bunks. Clear plastic chart slickers are a good idea.

LOG BOOKS

We used a set of thick hard-covered exercise books that we kept in a plastic bag. We made the log more of a diary than a traditional ship's log, sticking in postcards, clearance papers, stamps, bus tickets and so

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on. However, on a passage we were meticulous about reporting our daily position, mileage run and so on. For keeping a track of our Dead Reckoning either on a passage or coastally, we used a white plastic board and erasable felt pens, with the following columns:

Time Mag. Course Log Reading Miles Covered Notes

Water soluble pens can also be used in conjunction with a piece of clear plastic sheeting, paper clipped to a pilot chart, to plot the weather system from the coordinates read out over the radio.

MONEY

We carried a cash float of about $1000 U.S. dollars for emergencies and miscellaneous costs. *The dollar is recognized everywhere.* American Express Cheques in U.S. dollars are the most convertible kind of cheques. It is also useful to have an American Express (AmEx) card so that you can use worldwide AmEx offices for mail pickups.

For most purposes, we used a Gold MasterCard, and took our cash advances on it. As long as you keep topping up your account, this is a cheap and excellent system. Even the remotest islands now recognize the major credit cards.

Phone calls: It is often cheapest to call collect, especially from Mexico, where local taxes are prohibitive.

HOW MUCH DID FOUR YEARS & 36.000 MILES COST US?

Almost exactly *ten thousand ($10,000.) Canadian dollars per annum*, after fitting out. This figure is all-inclusive for two people, taking in everything from haul outs, telephone calls and car rentals to photographic film.

Nick +Jenny

Nick & Jenny Coghlan
"TARKA THE OTTER" Vega #1639

Editor's Note: A scanned copy of the original **VODCA** Newsletter No. 8/9-90, the Jun/Jul '90 issue, twenty pages in all, in which "**Preparing Your Vega for Offshore Cruising**" was originally published, is available on CD ROM along with the scanned **Vega Owners Repair and Maintenance Manual**, all one hundred eleven pages of it, an additional ten pages on strengthening the mast step support by **Lars Lemby** and the seven issues of the Vega Newsletter that I have published to date including the special 28 page **Rendezvous 2001** issue and all of the photographs from the rendezvous that I didn't have space for in the newsletter. All of the photographs in the newsletters appear in color on the CD of course. It would cost over US $100 just to print all of this out on paper, over three hundred pages in all, plus another $7 or $8 for domestic postage. Available to members for a minimum donation of US **$5**

Membership Application

Name: _____

Postal Address: _____

_____

_____

Country: _____

E-mail: _____

First Mate: _____

Hull/Sail No. _____

Boat Name: _____

Home Port: _____

Telephone: _____

New Member _____ **Renewal** _____

Membership Information

Membership renewals are currently **US$12** for one year for members residing in the United States. International memberships are **US$15**. **New memberships** are **US$25.** Membership includes a subscription to Fair Winds, published six times a year and a copy of **The Vega Owners Repair and Maintenance Manual and Archive CD**. Make checks payable to :

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