

NEWSLETTER # 6
Karaka Bay
Great Barrier Island, NZ.
March 1987

Dear Friends,

Yes, we have arrived in New Zealand safely, in one piece and in good health. Our new friends and this beautiful country are a joy to Georgia and me. But wait a minute, there is a lot I want to share with you that has happened since our last letter (September 86) and our land-falls from Western Samoa to New Zealand.

The last month we spent in Apia, Western Samoa was without Brenda since she had returned to Idaho and her job as fire fighter.

We have heard from Tualai, who is ministering in the prison in Apia, that many souls have been saved and especially three men who were in the maximum security cell block. Their lives were so changed when they gave their lives to the Lord that they were released on parole!!! Even the jailers are being changed by the Gospel. Praise the Lord!

Georgia's comments: My first extended crossing, from Samoa to Tonga, with just Loren and I as the crew was absolutely beautiful sailing. We knew the prayers of our friends in Samoa and back home had prepared the way for us. Upon arrival in Neiafu, Tonga, it wasn't long before we had met up with sailing friends that we had shared anchorages with along the way and to my delight there was the makings of a floating recorder ensemble! Oh, what fun it was to get together several times and share the music and fellowship. The waters were a bit cooler than Samoa but very clear and it was fun snorkeling for the many bright shells which Tonga is famous for.

We made special friends in the village of Hunga. We sang some of the songs we knew and then they sang for us. Later Emily and Violete' invited us up to their homes for a feast and to attend church with them. There is a shortage of Bibles here and we had some extra ones onboard that we gave to them which they really appreciated. They also asked us if there was anybody that could come to their village and live there for several months to teach them how to live as Christians during the week. They didn't think that just going to church on Sunday was the true Christian life. Many of the young people can read English but the older Tongans can't and so they need a newer translation of the Bible in Tongan since there are some errors in their present translation, so they say.

The King of Tonga is an active Christian leader of the nation and we hope you will pray for him and the needs of Tonga. Also pray for the believers in these islands as the cults are really active there.

Loren here: We spent several weeks in the capitol of Tonga, Nuku'Alofa, and as the time of departure for New Zealand came we watched the weather closely. Just before we were to leave there was a weather report on the radio that the first hurricane of the season had been building up in strength and was heading for Fiji and then Tonga! All the yachties in the harbor were calling back and forth on the VHF radio to determine if the hurricane was coming our way. As new weather reports came in we were convinced that it was heading our way and could arrive within 48 hours! Nuku' Alofa Harbor is very large

without any real good protection so the majority of the sailors decided we should see if there was a way in to the lagoon behind the city. The small fishing boats could get in there so a small expedition of dinghies and inflatable's headed out to locate and check the depth of the passage in. After much sounding, a passage was located and buoyed for boats that did not draw more than 6 feet of water. They could make it into the lagoon at high tide and so there was a parade of 12 yachts working their way through the marked channel the mile and a half into the protection of the lagoon. "American Flyer" and "Longhorn" had to stay out in the main harbor since they both drew 9 feet of water. As new weather reports came in it was evident that the hurricane, 'OSEA' was Gaining strength and speed in our direction. Georgia and I decided to fast and pray that the hurricane would dissipate in the open ocean before it could cause any damage. I also lessened any wind resistance on the boat in case the storm reached us. We dug out our storm anchor which was stored below the floorboards (THANKS FRED!) and connected it to the 300 ft. 3/4" nylon anchor line in preparation to set it. Some time later we tuned in the weather report and "OSEA" had been downgraded to a tropical depression. Several hours later the report was that the storm had become a LOW and then subsequent reports the storm was not even mentioned! It had dissipated completely before it had hit Fiji! Praise the Lord!!!

Within a couple of days the weather had settled enough that a fleet of fourteen yachts, including 'American Flyer', set sail for New Zealand. I felt that we needed to go as fast as we could while the weather was favorable so we choose a straight shot for Auckland. Some of the other yachts chose the more traditional route of heading more westerly to anticipate the southwest winds you normally encounter around 30 degrees south. Those that went the westerly route eventually were hit with an extreme low with up to 55 knot winds and were hove-to two to three days and forced several hundred miles more to the west. For us, it took only nine days to make the passage and we were one day ahead of that low when we made port at Great Barrier Island on December 7, 1986, just exactly on year to the day since we left port in San Diego, California!

It was dark when we pulled into the little secluded bay at Port Fitzroy and the anchor chain rattled out. The anchor hit the bottom and the stillness of the night settled in. Then the realization came to me that we had indeed made it to New Zealand and a joy welded up in my soul that this part of the vision had been completed. Two days later we sailed the remaining 60 miles into Auckland to check in with the customs who were helpful, courteous and efficient.

Our first contact was with Wyn Fountain, who we had been corresponding with. He came right down to the wharf and helped us find a place to tie up for our stay there. The next evening we were invited to tea (dinner) at Wyn and Shirley's home where we discussed what the status of the small boat ministry was to date. Clem Davis and Wyn had been trying to establish the ministry for the last six years and it has had its ups and downs without really catching hold here. Clem is at present in Los Angeles, California, and has formally established a nonprofit organization in the U.S.A. under the name of "SOUTH PACIFIC YACHT MINISTRY". A number of churches in California are catching the vision and are going to become involved in support and promotion. We also mentioned the need to establish a base and Wyn told of Orama Christian Fellowship, Great Barrier Island. Wyn wanted us to sail out there to have a look around to see if it were suitable. We agreed to do just that after Christmas and New Year when we returned from visiting our friends Ron and Bev Hubbard in Levin.

Wyn Loaned us a car for our two week trip down island to Levin and the drive through the country was beautiful, but rather a challenge since I hadn't driven a car for at least a year and here they drive on the

wrong side of the road! (For us Americans anyway) Also they don't post the maximum speed and so I was just trying to keep up with the traffic at 190 kph. Later I found out that the max was 100! Well anyway, it made for a fast trip to Levin. We didn't have any difficulty finding the right house. As we rounded the last corner we spotted a large sign tacked up on the side of a house, "WELCOME TO LOREN AND GEORGIA". What fun to be with our friends again. We reminisced about the times on the "M/V Anastasis" and at Camp Wainae in Hawaii while on our DTS with Youth With A Mission in 1984. They shared their family with us at Christmas which helped a great deal to overcome loneliness for our family that was so far away. Ron and his partner are building up a video production unit which they use to make programs for both the Christian and public market. The system that the Lord has led them into can produce very high quality video which is acceptable to the national TV networks, a real breakthrough. We are wondering how Ron's talents are going to be used in the small boat ministry?

On our way back up island to Auckland, we stopped at Rotarura and walked through the redwood forest which was a first time for me to see Redwoods. Then on to TePuke and Ian & Denise Jamieson's Kiwi fruit farm.

Back in Auckland, we hopped onboard "American Flyer" and sailed out to Orama at Great Barrier Island. The next morning we went ashore and spotted Wyn and Shirley, who were there for Convention, and they introduced us around to the leaders. Orama is an organization which brings in troubled people for rehabilitation who have agreed to let the Lord into their lives, so He can change them and heal their hurts. Orama is also the spot that Clem Davis has hoped would become the base for Christian boat outreaches and he has spent several years building their 47' schooner, 'Celebration' and a year operating it for them just before he went to the U.S.A. to register SPYM.

When they found out that I was a marina and waterfront builder, they asked if I would draw up a plan for waterfront improvement and a new landing and pier. Since we hadn't any definite plans for the next few months we decided that we would stay here and help out while most of the staff went on holiday in January and February. This gave me time to survey the shore and draw up a plan to present to the Trust Board which met early in March. Upon review of the plan they voted to go ahead with the improvements and the finance was immediately available for the project. We only have to get approval from the Harbor Board.

Wyn and I decided that a meeting of all those interested in a small boat ministry should be called. Wyn sent out notices to those he knew were interested and the meeting was scheduled for February 13, 1987, at his home in Auckland. We sailed to Auckland for the meeting and there was a great turnout of 46 people. Among them were representatives from "Every Home Crusade", "Amazing Grace Ministries", and individuals who had already done outreaches in the islands. Also included were owners of ten yachts in various stages of construction and three yachts that will be ready to sail to the islands for outreach this season. (May through October). After introductions, a list was made up of all present stating their interest and what they had to offer to the ministry, such as boats, crew, helper, administration, hospitality, materials and such.

Some of the goals suggested during discussion were: Choosing a name that could draw the several existing ministries together in unity; a director to oversee and promote the ministry; a coordinator who could locate yacht material and equipment for yachts under construction and also those needing a refit; and a pennant to fly so we can be easily recognized while sailing. Monthly meetings also deemed necessary for communication and unity.

All present were encouraged and it was decided that a director should be appointed at the next meeting on March 20.

Three days after we arrived at Orama, the person they had to run their schooner left so I fell heir to skippering the 47' steel schooner "Celebration" when ever they needed to haul supplies or passengers from across the Haurake Gulf, a four hour trip each way. So between waterfront development, skippering and maintaining the "Celebration" and a monthly trip to Auckland for meetings, the pace was picking up.

There were thirty two present at the March 20 meeting and we got right down to business. The first thing was a name which was voted to be "PACIFIC YACHT MINISTRIES". Next a committee was nominated of eight persons, in which I was included, to form a trust and to contact YWAM and other Christian organizations that might have a need for small boat transportation to the outer islands. The committee met the next day and dug right into the work to be done with different members being assigned appropriate responsibilities. As we parted, I was encouraged that we had a plan mapped out and the committee expects to meet again, before the next general meeting, to compile our findings.

A few more comments from the FIRST MATE: We were around a television set a few times and were able to watch some of the America's Cup Race in Australia. The TV coverage was tremendous and the New Zealand entry was formidable and had everyone guessing until "Stars & Stripes" came along. Our prayer for whoever wins, was that they would acknowledge the Lord, instead of 'good luck' or the 'gods of the sea'. We were thrilled one evening to see on worldwide television, the San Diego Yacht Club supporters cheering their yacht on, and when the commodore, Dr. Fred Fry, was interviewed, another member was standing next to him with a placard on his hat that said "GOD SAVE THE CUP" And He did!!!!

Here is some good news for would-be sailors. We have found a pill for seasickness which is proving better than all the rest that we are aware of. A chemist (druggist) in Ponsonby, Auckland, has invented it for aerobatics flying and the yachties here have really tested it out in the Tasman Sea. We find that there are not any side effects, such as drowsiness or loss of appetite or drying up of saliva. We recommend it.

Both Georgia and I have a longing in our hearts to hug our daughters and visit with our family and friends. We hope the Lord will make it possible to return to the U.S.A. for about a month to clear up some unfinished business and possibly encourage the sale of our house. Your prayers appreciated.

We hope you all are well and that the Lord is blessing you.

It would be encouraging to hear from you who enjoy receiving our newsletters.

God bless you all,

Loren & Georgia Murphy
Yacht: "AMERICAN FLYER"