

VEGA

Newsletter

Sidney A. Rosen, Editor (407) 352-9250

Voice of American Vega Sailors

No. 5 - 97



Welcome Aboard -
Thanks for joining - its nice to know you!

Jim & Carolyn Araujo
318 Broad St.
Hollis, NH 03049
Tel: (603) 883-9113
#1870, "VegaBound", 1973

Tony & Ros Craggs
444 Mill Road
Qualicum Beach, BC V9K 1J6
Canada
Tel: (250) 752-0856)
#993, "Chasquis", 1972

August & Katie Duurvoort
431 Semple Ave
Aptos, CA 95003
Tel: (408) 685-2024
"Gloria", 1976

Ralph Noorberg
20141 Big Basin Highway
Boulder Creek, CA 95006
Tel: (408) 338-9444

We also welcome back two old members!

Dick Chudley (1991-1995)
33-130 Corbett Road
Saltspring Island, B.C.,
Canada V8K 1T2
#1742, "Altair", 1972

Mark Allen (1984-1994)
RR32, Box 625 Fosterville Road
Bridgeton, ME 04009
Tel: 207-647-2242
#1066, "Bochica", 1971

SEAFARING SEMANTICS

Reef knots, Bowlines, Fisherman's Bend,
Clove Hitch, Sheepshank; Where will it end?
Starboard and Port, Fore and Aft.
So much to learn it's driving me daft!
It's driving me to drink, my Bosun's Whistle I'd wet,
But the Sun isn't over the Yardarm yet.
I'm told that a Spinnaker Sheet is lazy,
So why do they have it ---it's totally crazy!
The Head is a loo, a Sheet is a rope,
It's getting worse, I'm giving up hope;
But I'm going to escape this verbal rot,
For I've just made a Hangman's Knot!!

Rodney Jones (Nemone V1499)



Light airs

Rodney Jones

Henk en Margreet Jansen

1412 ES Naarden (NL) ,
Kolfbaan 18
Tel. (0031) 35 694 03 51

28 Jan 1997

Dear Florence and Sidney,

I have just finished reading your very entertaining Vega Newsletter which contained a reminder about paying my dues! So, I have enclosed a travellers cheque in US\$

We are preparing for our yearly trip to the Alps to do cross country skiing. Our son Rudolph will join us with his wife Bertine.

Our Vega "Le Cygne" is "moored in" thick ice. We did not take her out of the water this winter. She should sustain nicely!

I read your story about the water tank. We don't drink the water from the main tank, though I clean it thoroughly every spring. We have a separate 10 litre jerrycan (plastic) which I refill all the time. Your bulletin has a lot of questions from members such as reinforcing the mastdeck step, maintaining the Volvo Pinta diesel, stopping studding box leaks, painting the deck, etc.

I will write an article for the newsletter to answer a few questions in my amateurish way.

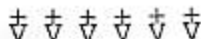
By the way, I read your article about "geezer" I will talk to Margaret about the Elderhostel Programs. It looks fine to me!

I hope you both are well!

Henk



(For many years Henk was editor of the Dutch "Kring Van Vega Zeilers" newsletter. Both he and Margaret have visited us here in Orlando several times.)



Going to the Panama Canal?

If you're headed toward the Panama Canal, here's an update on some recent changes. Last August the Panama Canal Commission voted unanimously to increase admeasurement fees on boats up to 100 tons. Part of the proposed increase was aimed at the on-deck cargo space on container ships that in the past transited free of charge. For

pleasure boats transiting the canal the increase in tolls, effective October 1, 1996, changed from a base fee of \$135 for first-time admeasurement to \$350. At press time the transit toll remained the same.

The past two years have seen record-breaking traffic in the canal, intensifying the need for a systematic program of upgrading and modernizing,

including widening the canal. The Panama Canal is a break-even business and its charter rules out borrowing money, or operating at a loss to finance necessary improvements. "We are confident our customers will understand," said Chairman of the Board Joe Reeder. "In the 82-year history of the canal, tolls have been raised only six times."

The going was rough but we made it!

WILLIAM ARNETT, P.E.
CONSULTING ENGINEER
2331 West Viewmont Way West
Seattle, Washington 98199
Telephone (206) 282-6390

Mr. Sidney A. Rosen, Editor
VEGA Newsletter
10615 Whitman Circle,
Orlando, FL 32821

I hope this letter finds you and yours in good health and enjoying sunny, warm weather. More about the weather later, but first an accounting of my recent boat trip through Deception Pass, Washington.

About twenty miles north of Seattle, in one of the most scenic coastal areas anywhere, lies Whidbey Island, the longest island in the contiguous USA, according to Washingtonians but not, I am sure, Long Islanders. Immediately north of Whidbey Island lies Fidalgo Island. The islands are connected only by a bridge high over a narrow, rocky channel; dramatic Deception Pass. The discoverer of this channel, observing such a strong current existing in the pass, mistook it for a river. From the vantage point of the high bridge the view of the channel and, on clear days, the outlying islands, is spectacular; steep cliffs and hillsides wooded with tall Christmas-tree like conifers, a favorite attraction for tourists and locals alike.

A move of my Vega, "Sommar Bris", from Seattle to a marina on Fidalgo Island, was necessary and I had a choice of two routes. One, the most direct and least protected, could possibly expose the boat to strong winds, very rough seas, and strong currents. The best sailing route no doubt but at this unpredictable time of year a potentially rough and wet ride for a modestly seasoned skipper and less experienced crew (I had a crew of one, more for her company than her yet untested ability i sailing.)

The other route, "inside", and north through Saratoga Passage, was protected on the west and southwest by Whidby Island, for the most part, not much longer, and it wouldn't have strong currents - until Deception Pass was reached.

I questioned many boaters about the alternatives in preparation for the trip. Most recommended the inside route with the admonition "go through the pass at slack" confirming my suspicion that the narrow channel and rapid currents could be treacherous. Although I had witnessed the pass from the bridge above, which can Attain 8.3 knots, what it was like regarding eddies; other obstructions, and the depth of the channel. The approaches from the east have steep banks and cliffs, hostile moorings.

I chose to go north through Saratoga Passage and Deception Pass, knowing that my 17HP Volvo diesel could push us through, however slowly, anything less than 6 knots of adverse current. A computer program provided print-outs of tides and currents to establish the precise ebb slack time for our arrival date.

As planned, we arrived in the vicinity of Deception Pass about a quarter of an hour before slack, by the clock, in order to size up the situation, that is, to look for other boats, traffic, and check the channel for width and obstructions. We expected a current no greater than two knots.

As we approached the narrowest part of the pass at 4 knots, the adverse current was stronger than that predicted. To our relief there was no traffic. At the neck of the channel I started watching the rock cliffs on my port. To my consternation and distress we were not only making head-way but we were drifting sideways toward the rocky cliffs. I increased the power to about 2000 rpm, about 5 knots, which meant that we had about 20% margin before we would be pushed backward in what was now a very narrow rocky channel. I noted, Thankfully, that the increased power overcame the current and we began to ease away from the rocks; very gradually picking up speed. What a helpless feeling to be almost at maximum power, drifting sideways and about to be drifting backwards - out of control!

I was puzzled that the current was so swift, in excess of 4 knots, but relieved that we were making headway through the pass and my crew was calm; always an asset. As the channel widened, the current slowed and I felt confident we were through the worst of it. I remarked to crew that the passage was anticlimactic. It wasn't disappointing - just never exhilarating.

Beyond and west of the narrow pass, we entered a bay that proceeds the straits proper. I noticed that one side of the bay was relatively flat while the other side had quite a chop. Looking for our course which was to the north of an island at the exit of the bay, I noticed that the chop was turning into four foot waves in our route. Navigating the pass, now well behind us, was certainly anticlimactic to our present situation.

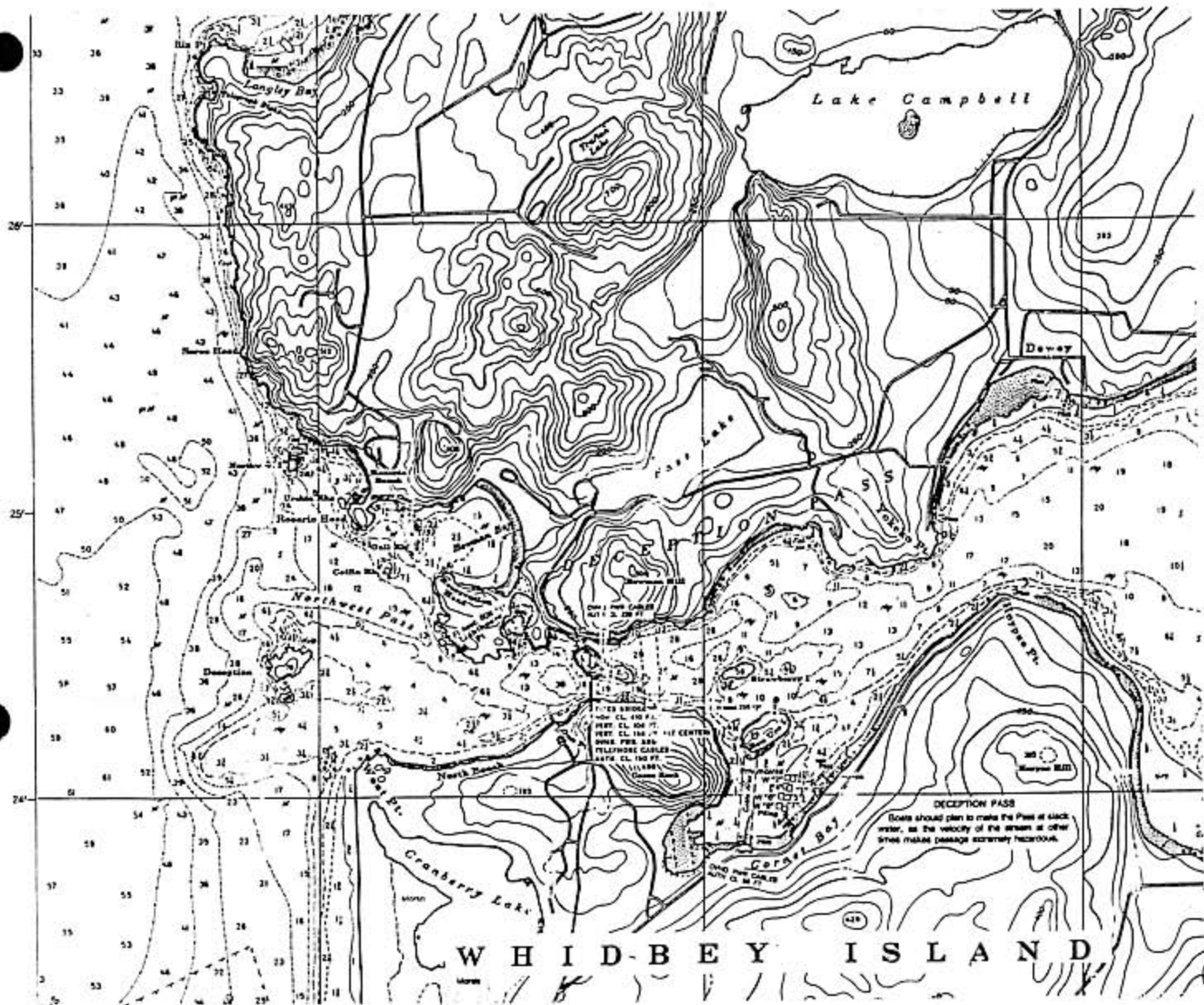
As we approached the island I needed to steady myself to take the larger waves; the pitching and rolling of the boat was uncomfortable and it was going to get worse; but what to do? The waves directly in front of us were becoming enormous.

Our original plan was to head due west from the Pass, over tranquil seas, toward the south end of Lopez Island, about five miles across Rosario Straits, and thence to a destination in Friday Harbor, San Juan Island, approximately 15 NM distance from the Pass. Days later we would sail back and east to moorage on Fidalgo Island, some five miles north of our present location. Our situation was becoming desperate and the thought of heading due west into the tumultuous seas of the straits had lost its appeal; we now had but two options: to turn around and reenter Deception Pass and, if successful, put in at Coronet Bay. Or to turn toward the north to safe haven at Skyline Marina, which was our ultimate destination anyway.

The farther out and beyond the island we got, (we were making headway despite of the waves) the waves became larger. I was unsure of just how much pounding the boat could take; we were not being battered yet, but as we were heading directly into the waves but that would change with an altered course. There was no way out.

The acute tenseness of the situation was underlined by the complete silence of the crew, no one saying a word, spending our energy on composure and focusing our attention on the moment, readying for the next blow. Crudely but aptly stated "the pucker factor was off the scale". Continuing our heading west was unthinkable.

Turning back, which would appear forever like a cowardly move (which looked more and more like something I could live with if only the waters would settle down a bit) would mean that we would have to later face the pass once again and perhaps this very situation again; we didn't have unlimited time to await calm conditions. Also, the boat could be possibly swamped from seas breaking over the transom.



Turning North would mean that we would be paralleling the waves and possibly suffer a broach. But there would be shelter in two miles in the lee of a couple of islands. I dared not take too long to decide.

The boat was now being slammed by huge waves that were breaking over the bow, sending cascades of water aft. My crew, sitting on the weather side of the cockpit seemingly oblivious of the near terror I was experiencing, would have been drenched, as I, but for the dodger, custom made by an off-shore cruiser, larger and stronger than the original.

I chose to head North, taking the smaller waves broadside, quartering only on the larger and uglier ones. It was slow going and I feared for the safety of the boat and crew. At times the boat was lifted so high upon a wave that the propeller came clear of the water and raced wildly; I dreaded the sound for fear of broken parts. But with one hand on the tiller and one on the dodger, it was all I could do to steer and hang on; small chance of me reaching the throttle to reduce power.

We proceeded on our northerly course, being bounced around badly and rolling severely. I tried to read the heel-meter but it was impossible to fix my gaze long enough. My feet were spread apart on the cockpit floor for stability, one hand clutching the dodger, one trying to steer with the tiller. My thoughts of possible mechanical failures: Tiller handle which was being tested with each wave. The engine conking out, which had never happened in the past, but . . . The notorious rudder breaking as has happened with other Vegas. And general failure of the mast rigging because the mast was being whip-lashed with each roll of the boat.

I wasn't afraid, there wasn't time. Seeing a huge wave come upon us, holding my breath, tightening my grip on the tiller, taking the blow. Then recoiling, quickly getting back into position, and taking mental inventory of the obvious, dreading any hint of damage to vital boat parts; wanting to know and yet knowing that nothing could be done if something essential was breaking. Steeling myself for the next blow, Looking no farther in front of the boat than the next wave and hoping it would be farther off and smaller than the last, but it wasn't.

All the gear that had been stowed, foolishly, on the settees and counter tops, was collecting in a heap upon the cabin floor; small concern. Cleaning up after this thrashing would be a pleasure, but we had to survive first. Dreading a high-pitched and frantic answer full of invective and hateful epithets, fearing questions regarding my sanity, the circumstances of my birth, and "what right did I have for getting her into this mess in the first place", cautiously I asked my crew how she was doing. Her response was "Wow!" I took a quick look in her direction to see if this was, in fact, the height of sarcasm, thankfully it wasn't.

As we cut our way farther and farther north, through the biggest waves I have ever seen, short of a disaster movie, I was able to look a little beyond the 15 to 20 feet in front of the boat that had been my critical range. The islands we were heading for were becoming larger and the sea appeared to be settling down, until every fourth or fifth wave would loom up and again I would hold my breath and steel myself for a wild roll to starboard.

After a quarter of an hour, it seemed like hours, we were through the worst of the seas and I felt confident that we were not going to be destroyed. Still, steering required my full attention. It was such a relief seeing calmer seas ahead. By now we were about one mile west of Fidalgo Island and about two miles south of our revised destination. Looking about we saw a sailboat in closer to the island and wondered if we would have been better off closer in. Fearing the shorter distance to the rocky cliffs, toward which the sea was bashing, I was content with my choice. Five minutes more and we were completely out of danger and in the lee of Burrows Is. and very close to the marina entrance. We had made it. The Vega held up nicely and there was no damage to crew or boat.

I was completely occupied with steering during our ordeal and couldn't realistically judge the wave height. My companion, after docking estimated the waves were 12 feet high. Days later, after time to calm down and lose the exaggeration of the excitement I asked again. Her answer: 12 feet...

I realize that I focused upon one peril only to overlook a greater, much greater one. Perhaps not so much overlooked as unknown. But how to guard against the "unknown"? Gained are invaluable knowledge about how well the Vega handles in huge seas and confidence in the well built boat. No longer trepidation of six foot seas. A new respect for thorough route planning, port to port. Always more preparation.

This was an experience, like none other, guaranteed not to be repeated!

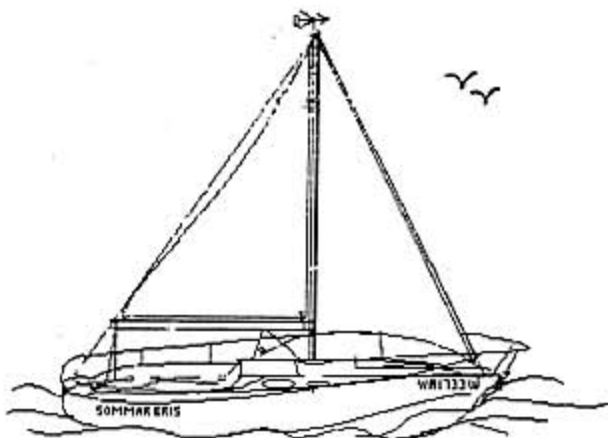
Regarding the weather, I hope it holds out. I'll be in Pompano Beach, FL in the middle of this month for two weeks. May I give you a call?

Sincerely,



Bill Arnett
"Sommar Bris" (#1568, built in 1972)

November 6, 1996



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December 17, 1996

Dear Sid:

With the enclosed cheque in US \$ comes my best wishes for the new year and a happy Christmas!

In the late fall I had an extensive refit of my cockpit this included:

- A new (redesigned) dodger with zippered front windows & 'side pockets' for new mainsheets leading from the boom forward of the dodger. No sheets or lines in the cockpit now!
  - An added bimini below the boom, but I had to cut 10" off the foot of the main.
  - A zippered window between aft end of the dodger & forward edge of bimini.
  - A rear zippered window & "sunbrella" to cover the cockpit.
- All on stainless steel frames which fold down around and behind the aft coaming.

Will send photographs in the spring for the newsletter

Best wishes

David Whiteman

P.O. Box 5024, Penetanguishene, Ontario CANADA L9M 2G2  
Tel. & Fax: (705) 549-6663

A letter from Rodney Jones in Northern Ireland -

9 Brianville Drive  
Kilmaine, Bangor BT19 6EG  
Co. Down, Northern Ireland

2nd Jan 1997

Dear Florence and Sidney - or should I say "dear Globe Trotters"?

You certainly have been doing some traveling and going to extremes - from Alaska, the Caribbean, South America and Panama. I hope that by now you have recovered from the penicillin allergy that you developed on your trip to Alaska! Vi and I have only been abroad twice this year - to Fuerteventura in the Canary Islands and later to Menorca in the Mediterranean. We recently went to England - to Newcastle in the N.E. to visit the "METRO CENTRE" which is reputed to be the largest indoor shopping mall in the whole of Europe. It certainly is HUGE and although we spent a full day there we did not visit all of it!

Unfortunately, we did not get to the VEGA I.F.R. in Germany last July, as we did not know about it in time to make the necessary arrangements. I did write to Lars Lemby about it but am not sure if Lars got my letters. I seem to have two different street numbers for him in Stockholm.

I have been working on 'NEMONE' and have some jobs to complete not least of which will be the renewal of the cockpit locker lids. The existing ones are rather scuffed. I had thought of putting teak decking around the cockpit seats as I saw a Vega in Denmark in 1992 which had been decked like this and it looked extremely well.

This year Vi and I have planned a cruise in the Caribbean (first flying out of Barbados) after which we will be sailing back across the Atlantic to Madeira, then to Gibraltar and finally to Majorca. From there we fly home. We would also like to visit Canada later in the year (possibly August or September). We hope to visit Winnipeg where VI was born.

Is your son-in-law till cycling? Unfortunately, last year I did not get as many miles covered as I would have liked. I was still involved in Road Safety and had arranged to give talks to several local groups. In addition, I have been exhibiting pictures in my own Art Club Exhibitions and other local exhibitions. Indeed, I sold my only entry in the Percy French Water Colour Exhibition which is open to both professionals and amateurs and is considered quite a prestigious exhibition. I believe two of my pictures were bought by an American here on holiday. On the subject of Art I am enclosing another small collection of small drawings which you may use as "corner fillers" in the Vega Newsletter. I am also enclosing a little poem which you might like to publish on the frustrations of the nautical language.

I think that's all for now. I hope the two of you are enjoying good health. VI & I wish you and Florence a very Happy, healthy 1997.

Sincerely,  
Rodney Jones





Lars Lemby  
Kastanjevägen 8  
S-132 46 Saltsjö-Boo  
Sweden  
Tel/Fax: +46(0)8-715 87 04

19 Feb. 97

Sidney A Rosen  
10615 Whitman Circle  
Orlando, Fl 32821  
USA

Dear Sid,

Many thanks for your latest letter and for the Newsletters — as always interesting and pleasant reading. You are doing a very fine job, Sid! Please find enclosed with this letter my fee for this year (a \$20-note, which seems to be the cheapest and simplest form of transaction) and the translation of one of the "Technical Tips" from the Swedish Vega Club.

These tips are published in the club bulletin called "Vega-bladet" ("the Vega Leaflet" — the Scandinavian word *blad* = English *blade*, e.g. *kniv-blad* = *knife-blade*, i. e. something flat and thin, hence also the second meaning of the word = *leaf*, both on a tree or as a sheet in a book or newspaper). This bulletin is issued by the Swedish Vega Club but is common for the 3 Scandinavian clubs in Sweden, Denmark and Norway. Our 3 languages are so similar that we can read and understand each others writing although we do not always understand the spoken languages.

With kind regards.



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The figure below should be interpreted as a simplified longitudinal section of the starboard side of the Vega (with its bow to the left). The water tank is of course not drawn with its real shape and position. The problem to be solved is to find a simple method for measuring the remaining amount of water in the tank.

The idea is to make visible the level of fresh water in the system by rising in an easily seen place a transparent piece of tube connected to the system. Cut the pipe connecting the water tank in the bow with either the wash basin in the heads or the sink in the cabin and install a T-joint. A good place has turned out to be on the forward side of the mast bulk-head. Here the level can be watched through the fore hatch, when you are filling up the tank.

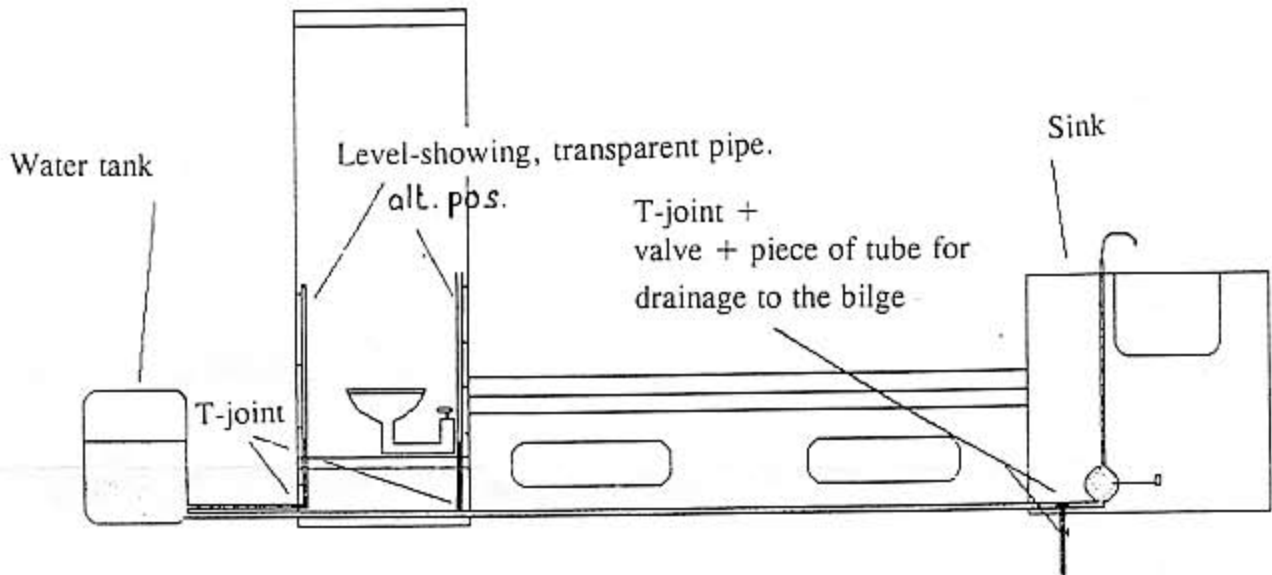
Install a filter in the rising tube near the T-joint. Also put a filter over the open top of it to prevent any dirt to get in.

Put a small piece of cork in the vertically rising pipe to help you to see where the level is.

Fill up the system from empty with a 10 l bucket (or whatever kind of volume measurement you prefer) and indicate the level of the cork for each bucket.

While you are working with the fresh water system you might find it worthwhile to put in another T-joint under the sink at the lowest possible point. With a valve here it will be easy to drain the system when the boat is not to be used for a long period, e. g. a winter.

It is regarded as good practice to use none-transparent pipe (tube, hose) for the water system, since algae will not grow so readily in darkness. With this in mind it might be wise to cover the "level-showing pipe" with some kind of cover. For instance: Shave off 1/4 of the circumference of a black, plastic pipe and thread it over the "level-showing" one and fix it with some spanners. When not in use rotate the cover so that the opening is facing into a corner.



Jan Skoog VEGA 1959



From "Log of the Mahina" by John Neal (1995 revised edition) -

"The storm trisail is a sail that isn't talked about very much, but I think it is worth its weight in gold when conditions call for it. I originally tried lacing mine on the mast, but found the friction caused when trying to hoist it was too great and made it a slow process. I then riveted stainless steel track on the mast alongside the regular sail track. This way I was able to the trisail bent on and lashed to the mast in its bag; all I had to do was drop the main, connect the halyard and sheet and hoist it in its own track. Other advantages the trisail has over a deeply reefed main are that the main isn't being worn out and there is no boom to zonk you on the head if you accidentally gybe. Instead the trisail just flops back and forth harmlessly. I usually sheet the boom down so that it is just above the dodger, putting equal tension on it between the mainsheet, topping lift and boom vang. This makes an immovable support in the center of the cockpit to put an arm over to hold on to, or clip a safety harness to.

Sidney A. Rosen  
10615 Whitman Circle,  
Orlando Florida,  
32821

Dear Sidney

Please find enclosed my cheque for \$12.00 for 1997 Vega newsletter and fees.

Just returned from an 10 day Panama cruise on the Crystal Symphony. An exquisite trip, food, entertainment while on board, preceded and followed by an undescrivable steerage class air trip to and from the respective ports.

The high point of the trip was a conducted tour of the engine room and bridge.

The boat which is considered state of the art uses 6 only 9 cylinder diesel electric low speed engines and on DC drive motor on each of two variable pitch propellers. In addition there are two thru-hull bow thrusters and one thru hull stern thruster which allows the boat to turn in its own length as well as enter and leave a port without requiring the use of a tug boat. In addition, this 50,000 ton 850 foot liner is able to stop in 1 1/2 lengths from a top speed of 22 knots, (clear the decks and clear the tables at the same time)

On the bridge, along with all the other l'objects remain is a transponder interpreter for any ship in the area giving all of that ship's vital statistics as well as CD ROM with all the world charts stored for instantaneous *re-call*.

The ship even has two captains, one social (Norwegian) and one commercial (Japanese) since the boat is owned by a Japanese consortium.

As you might gather, this kind of cruising isn't exactly my bag but nevertheless interesting.

Gordon Griffiths (Griffiti 3216)

*Gordon*

