



PHOTO 25

*As participants in a convoy of fellow circumnavigators with whom the Hanelts had become close personal friends during the previous months, SKYLARK challenged the Indian Ocean.*

*From Bali, the flotilla made port at Christmas Island, 583 miles to the west, and then at Cocos Keeling Island, 530 miles further.*

**W**e spent nine days at Cocos Keeling waiting for the weather to moderate. When, finally, it didn't, we just left.

During that time, we shared the anchorage with 13 other cruising yachts that were also making the crossing. There were Germans, Australians, Kiwis, Canadians . . . it was an international group and, since we were united against a common foe, the Indian Ocean, we were very friendly.

To get together, we would have a kind of potluck dinner. The men would take one of the boats and dive on the reef for fish for dinner, while the ladies would prepare supporting delicacies, usually from a can, but good. In this photograph (Photo 25), Shiela Clancy of the South African yacht *KUAN YIN* holds up the last of a fish for Kristi to clean.

Also while in Cocos Keeling, we made last minute repairs and adjustments to *SKYLARK*. Here (Photo 26) Robby and Grant Adams, who we picked up as a crewmember in New Zealand, sink some deeper screws into the mainsail track

where the reefed main clew is made fast when the sail is reefed. We had decided to reef even before we left the anchorage. Other yachts, like *BEBINKA*, shed their mains completely and put on their storm trysails; this is the kind of preparation one makes to cross the Indian Ocean.

It took us 14 days to sail 2,350 miles to Mauritius, and we had the main reefed nine of those days! The Indian Ocean may not be very friendly, but one can certainly make good time.

*In Mauritius, the Hanelts spent a month relaxing at the Grand Baie Yacht Club and preparing for the next leg of their crossing, 1600 miles southeast to Durban.*

We spent six weeks in Durban. For us, it was a port like New Zealand, where we accomplished a lot of maintenance in preparation for the next year's cruising. We hauled out at Durban and encountered another small disaster when the small slipway came off its tracks and almost capsized *SKYLARK* into the street. Only quick work by all our yacht friends prevented a costly disaster.

As it was, we incurred so much mental anguish that Kristi and I nearly had breakdowns. At this point in our trip, we were nearly impoverished and could not have withstood any financial liability for repairs. The shipyard, however, made good what small damage was done. We finally completed our repairs and had an opportunity to spend several weeks

enjoying the beautiful Natal Province and Zululand, really getting the feel of Africa.

*Of his 850-mile passage from Durban Harbor to Capetown, Bob says, "We actually had the best trip of all the yachts that year, having only one gale which blew from astern and swept us, in a foam of white water, past the famous cape, right at the end of our passage."*

*A three-week layover in Capetown saw SKYLARK fully outfitted and resupplied for the long ocean passage to Martinique in the Caribbean West Indies, 5,500 miles from Capetown. During the transit, the Hanelt's made two stops: one at rugged Fernando de Noronha Island, a Brazilian Air Force base; the other at St. Helena Island, famous as the last island of incarceration for Napoleon Bonaparte.*

We spent two days exploring the rather surprisingly beautiful island before the rolling anchorage drove us back to sea. In this photograph (Photo 27), Kristi is sitting on the wall of the fort overlooking the anchorage of James Bay. *SKYLARK* can be seen in the center of the bay.