

British Virgin Islands (BVI) - May 11-20, 1987

What an incredibly beautiful place. What I said about loving the mountains can now be combined with my love of sailing. This place has both, beautiful, clear, blue water, white beaches, those wonderful mountains, moderate temperatures. This must be paradise. We've been here for two days now and thank goodness we have 6 days left. It's Thursday morning around 8:00AM. Walker is off trying to master windsurfing. Carl and Karen, our shipmates, are still crashed down below. And I'm just enjoying the beauty and the quiet here in the cockpit, having a cup of coffee, and trying to record this fantastic experience.

We've only been on one island, Tortola. It's hard to describe. I'm not sure I would say it's very poor here because it may just be the lifestyle here. The houses, which cost quite a bit, are plain. There is no landscaping at all. There are goats on the side of the roads. All the women wear dresses or skirts. It is almost 100% black. All of the cruisers are white. Tortola did not seem very commercialized.

The first night we spent off Norman Island in the Bight. It was a small cove with no beach. The second night we spent in Dead Man's Bay off Peter Island. The beach here is beautiful. There is a marina and resort

here that Paul McCartney supposedly stayed in and cost \$3500.00 per night. There are houses in the hills here. Today we are off to the Baths at Virgin Gorda.

We've been scuba diving twice already. The first day we dove the caves on Norman Island. It was really neat to be under the water where you could see so clearly. Karen and I had only dove in Texas and you can't see anything there. The second day we dove "The Indians" off Pelican Island and that was really pretty. We spent about an hour there. It was pretty shallow, no deeper than 25 feet. There were tons of fish and coral. It was great. I really enjoy scuba.

Well, it's time for me to sun my body for a while. We are all so lazy and, why not. It's so relaxing and easy here.

It is now our last night here. We are anchored off Marina Cay. It is close to Tortola. Today we had breakfast onboard, sailed over to Colison Point, Virgin Gorda, and dove Van Ryan's Rock. The current was extremely strong and very hard to swim against. Then we stopped at the marina on Virgin Gorda. We stayed at the Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbor on

our third night which was Thursday night. We had gone to the Baths that day and they were really pretty. They are a bunch of enormous boulders. You can walk between them as they are on the beach. Water from the Caribbean flows between the rocks and you can swim in the little pools. Some are very warm. It's a very pretty place, also very relaxing.

We spent the night at the marina and went in to Virgin Gorda for dinner. We ate at Fischer's Cove. It was a veranda over the beach and looked out over the islands. Nice place. We really pigged out. They had some delicious pumpkin soup. After we ate we walked around a bit in search of some music but ended up back at the marina. They had a guy playing music there so we stayed for a while and enjoyed a little local color.

(You know, I've noticed that my handwriting is awful. I guess it's because I haven't used it for so long.)

Next day, Friday, we took off for Anegada. Walker fell in love with the place and I knew he would. It is the Moon Valley of the BVI.

Anegada is the least pretty of the BVI. It is the only island that is not volcanic in nature. This island was created by the movement of the Atlantic and Caribbean plates, which meet to the N.E. of the island. The

island is 9 miles long and surrounded by a sandy beach. It is also surrounded by a reef which makes it dangerous for boats unless they know how to get in to the island.

We anchored there around 1:30 and took the dinghy in to investigate. There is pretty much nothing there. There is a resort; 20 rooms, dining area, hut type bar. Everything is out-of-doors. Not fancy at all. We stopped at the bar and started drinking rum smoothies. They were excellent. We learned a lot about the hotel and island from the bartender, a woman from Austin. They also served lobster for dinner so we signed up.

We met the owner, a man named Lowell Wheatley. What a personality. We watched him "kill" lobster at 4:00PM and then cook them at 7:00PM. We got 2 lbs. of lobster each. Stuffed, stuffed, stuffed. Everyone was so friendly that we stayed the next day and went to Loblolly Beach. Here we dove in the reef. It was really pretty and different to be able to swim under the coral heads. But it was a lot of work to get out to the reef. We spent 3 hours in the water that day. We were all exhausted sooooo we had some more rum smoothies and Walker and I had BBQ ribs for dinner that evening. Lowell's food was really good.

Walker went windsurfing here several times. The last morning we were there, Sunday morning, Walker went windsurfing with a shark. It was a baby, about 1½ ft. long but he didn't want to find out if its teeth were in yet. He said the shark really helped his windsurfing - kept him on the board.