

SV NEVER DIE WONDERING II



Philippines navy on Pirate patrol



Local girls Frewin Island on out rigger



Wayag Island



Tranquil cove Halmahera [note volcano]

Voyage 2023

From West Papua to the Philippines

At present I am at Samal Island in the Philippines, just across the water from the Philippines second largest city Davao's. Unfortunately, here at the marina, is were in 2015 Terrorists kidnaped and executed yacht people. Now the area is guarded with a gate stopping any undesirables from entering. Besides the terrible situation of the past, it's a pleasant marina and the Island along with the city of Davao's is extremely clean and impressive No plastic waste in the water ways a far cry from Indonesian waters.

In the last two months I have sailed solo 1,064 nm from Sorong West Papua exploring many islands and meeting wonderful warm friendly people along the way.

Raja Ampat renowned for its fluorescent coral and magnificent picturesque islands did not disappoint. On the island of Waigo I was taken by small vessel into a large lagoon, in the early hours of the morning, then climbed up a hill in the dark to witness the elusive Birds of

Paradise display their mating dance, several birds calling Nearby females into their lair displaying their feathers and dancing to a unique calling sound.

Another occasion on another small island natives showed me how they quickly climb trees with a makeshift dried palm leaf fashioned as a rope, and with incredible precision they race up the palm tree to obtain the sort after fruits.

*“Fear kills more dreams.
than failure ever will”*



Crane catching fish in flight



Tree climbers.



Abandoned huts



Birds of Paradise

NEAR DISASTER

Sailing and living this nomadic sea lifestyle is not all beer and skittles? I was tied to a swing mooring placed in by a local native who also operate a hut stay [accommodation] I paid him a small fee to be on the mooring as the lagoon was 40 meters deep and surrounded by a coral fringe. I usually prefer to trust my own tackle gear, but due to the circumstance coral protection I choose to be on the swing mooring, as it had fairly new lines in good condition and the lagoon is surrounded by high hills, a calm night full moon and I quickly fell asleep listening to the incredible jungle night birds. I was awoken by a fierce storm, with the

horrendous sound of crunching of coral beneath my hull, gale force winds had dragged me and my vessel with swing mooring attached over the coral reef [nightmare stuff] it was now 2 am in the morning I quickly calculated it was also the low tide so with in 4 hours the tide will rise enough to free the vessel[if the vessel survives] The wind was now howling from my bow with the stern being pushed into mangrove's and if the vessel became wind on beam I would then be in a worst situation, pushed further over coral both hulls.

I quickly took a 40 meter line and with the tender got into the mangroves secured the line to a trunk [recently a 14 meter croc known to live were I tied the line] then back aboard to spend several hours physically preventing the vessel not to go wind to beam [exhausting to say the least] to be honest a called for help... please Lord please Allah please Neptune Poseidon don't let this happen? Then all of a sudden right as dawn was breaking a wind shift along with the higher tide and I was out into the lagoon safely..... and unbelievable that day checking for damage was only superficial wounds to Never Die Wondering II and amazingly no visible signs of damage to the coral, it was the worst situation in nearly five years I have been in?

"The world is a huge place,

how do you know where you fit in,

unless you experience beyond your comfort zone"

Ernest Shackleton



Seeking refuge



Fluorescent Blue Coral



Fluorescent Green Coral

Might be the man eater

After two days recovering both physically and mentally, I sailed north crossing the equator at 1420 hours on the 10th of January 2023 traditionally out came the whiskey for a nip and offerings to Neptune and Poseidon and asking their help to watch over me now in the northern hemisphere as they had done well in the south.

On the Island of Palau Kawe [Paula meaning Island] I anchored to be met by a 15 foot crocodile passing the vessel.

Several years ago a Russian yachtie was killed when taken by a croc in the same place as this reptile, one wonders could it be the same man eater? I decided not to check under the vessel at this place.

The Jewel of Raja Ampat is Paula Wayag and once there you quickly realise why its considered the jewel, one of the most picturesque places I have ever been to, towering limestone islands with small sandy beaches turquoise colour waters, and safe peaceful anchorages,



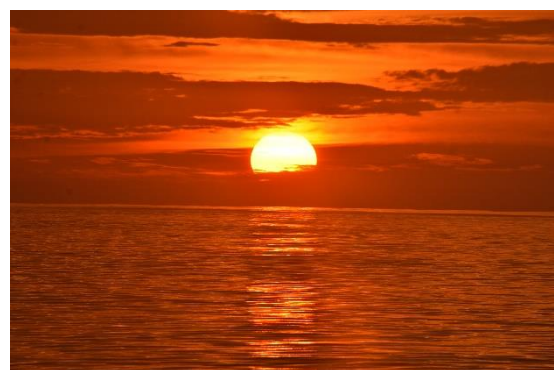
Wayag the Jewel of Raja Ampat



Beach Raja Ampat



Raja Ampat



Halmahera Sea

I crossed the Halmahera Sea to the many islands as well as the large Halmahera island itself. This region from North Halmahera Island to the Spice Islands of Banda Nera are part of the Molucca region, with hundreds of different islands and cultures, they all share a similar culture dance and song, sailing across this region you pass an underwater volcano that is

known to erupt now and then. But the volcanos of Halmahera region both active and dormant are spectacular to see, and sailing past these ancient mountains pushing out of their cone plumes of sulphur smoke is a sight to behold.

Anchorage can be good , bad and some times you are just on edge all night, on the North side of Halmahera the wind prediction was opposite to what was reported and with night approaching I anchored only a short distance from a surf break. It actually was a good anchorage watching the break both sides of never die wondering II?

*“When asked, the Buddha, what is the biggest mistake one can make,
the Buddha replied YOU THINK YOU HAVE TIME?”*

Halmahera and adjacent Islands have the warmest and most friendly of people as does the entire Molucca region. On the west side of the enormous island, I had fishermen bring me their catch for the night hence Crayfish for breakfast of what equated to \$2.50 a cray?

I was shown around one village by two local sisters and asked back to their home to meet their family along with what seemed like the entire village in one room coming to greet me.

These girls also took me to their local water full a magnificent sight fresh water ponding down a cliff into the sea water surrounded by coral. We took the tender right underneath this large body of fresh water for a quick refreshing shower.



Tobelo smoking volcano



Kite up sailing towards Ternate and volcano



Riding the bow wave



Water Village Bitung Sulawesi

Ternate another volcano island rich in history, it was here the Portuguese took over the islands for the lucrative cloves another spice. In 1570 they foolishly executed the island Sultan only to have the local inhabitants surround their fort? As they Portuguese had cannon fire it was impossible for the locals to get into the fort so they did the next best thing, kept the Portuguese prisoner with in their own fortress for 5 years until they starved them out? When I left Ternate, I had a couple of people bring me food for my journey again the hospitality of the Indonesian is second to none.

From Ternate I crossed the Molucca Sea to Sulawesi an over nighter, dodging the many fishing vessels at night. Here I obtained my clearance out of Indonesia and then island hopped to the Philippines. The passage was going to be windward but the prediction was for light winds.

I was not expecting 30 knots day after day so beating towards Davao created a further distance of what was planned. On one of the last islands in Indonesia, I anchored between two jetties were by the locals from the jetty indicated to anchor.

I then had three people in an out rigger paddle over to me, they indicated they wanted to step aboard, two wore plain clothes to T shirts a and one in the middle a camouflage shirt.

As the first feller stepped onto my vessel, I was holding the bow of the timber craft when all of a sudden he leans back into the boat and pulls our a semi-automatic weapon? I immediately placed my hand up towards the weapon at his chest and demanded what's with the gun? They quickly explained they were soldiers and it was for their protection, I also quickly realised this was so and they came aboard to make sure I was no pirate as there is a fort on the island.

Again the generosity of the islanders came through with them returning later on with a meal of Fried bananas and even gave me an army cap. Telling me how I'm an inspiration to them as solo sailing and they warning me of the potential pirate threat.

Then when I crossed into Philippines waters I had the navy, boarder my vessel fully armed. When they were certain, that I was no pirate they gave me a coffee mug as a gift and explained how to reach them if I need anything at all. Its actually extremely comforting having both Indonesia and Philippine's in these waters.



Indonesia army with one of my books as gift



Ternate anchored in the port



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Cray fish for breaky



Fish vendor door to door



Waterfall with local girls



Ternate Fort



Lake Ternate



Indonesian Islands

"An adventurer, a free-spirited person must never conform to other people's expectations. It is essential to live your dreams, to explore and to discover. Anything less would eventually lead to a life of regret.

Pursue the ultimate- goal to NEVER DIE WONDERING."

Alistair J MacLeod

Never Die Wondering



Kind regards

Alistair Macleod

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