

BERNARD MOITESSIER

Interview Conducted and Transcribed by
Frank DiMarco

Bernard Moitessier sailed his 40-ft. ketch, Joshua, into Sausalito a couple of months ago, non-stop and singlehanded from Tahiti. Nothing new for Bernard. In his thirty-years or more of sailing he has covered so much water that it is hard to decide how to list it.

At twenty-one he had his first vessel, a sailing junk, which he used for trading between Rachgia (South Viet Nam) and Kampot (Cambodia) in his native Southeast Asia. At twenty-seven he singlehanded a 31-ft. junk Marie Therese west via Singapore only to be shipwrecked in the Indian Ocean. At thirty, he built a new boat, Marie Therese III on Mauritius Island and singlehanded to South Africa then to the West Indies. A few months after arriving in the West Indies he lost his boat on a reef. The next boat he built and launched, when he was thirty-seven, is the now-famous Joshua.

Among the many voyages in this yacht was a four-month non-stop trip from Tahiti to France with his wife. At the time (1966) it was the longest non-stop trip ever made by a

yacht. Yes, via Cape Horn.

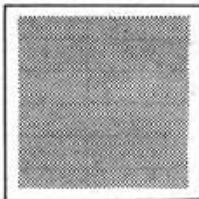
Moitessier has written three books: Sailing to The Reefs, published in England by Holly & Carter; Cape Horn, the Logical Route, published in the U.S. by William Morrow; and The Long Way, an account of his ten-month, singlehanded race 1½ times around the world, published by Doubleday.

In addition, Mr. Moitessier has with him a 45-minute film, in color, of that voyage, a trip which took him from Plymouth, England, the start of the Sunday Times Race, around the Cape of Good Hope, Cape Leuwin (South of Australia), Cape Horn, and again around Good Hope and Leuwin on his way to Tahiti. 37,000-miles — non-stop and singlehanded! Bernard will be presenting the movie at several northern and southern California locations early this year.

Over smoked oysters, sharp cheddar and wine aboard my ketch, I talked with Bernard about his sailings, his boat and his philosophies.

38: One of the stories that goes around is that you were well on your way to winning a very famous around-the-world race and for some reason turned around and went the other way.

Moitessier: When I turned around I sent a message on my slingshot. You know, I used to have pieces of lead and when I wanted to send a message to be cabled, I would try to attract ship with a signal mirror, then I would slingshot the message to the ship. In this case the cable was addressed to the *Sunday Times*, the sponsor of the race. The message I sent was, "I am continuing throughout the Pacific because I am happy at sea and also to save my soul," that's all

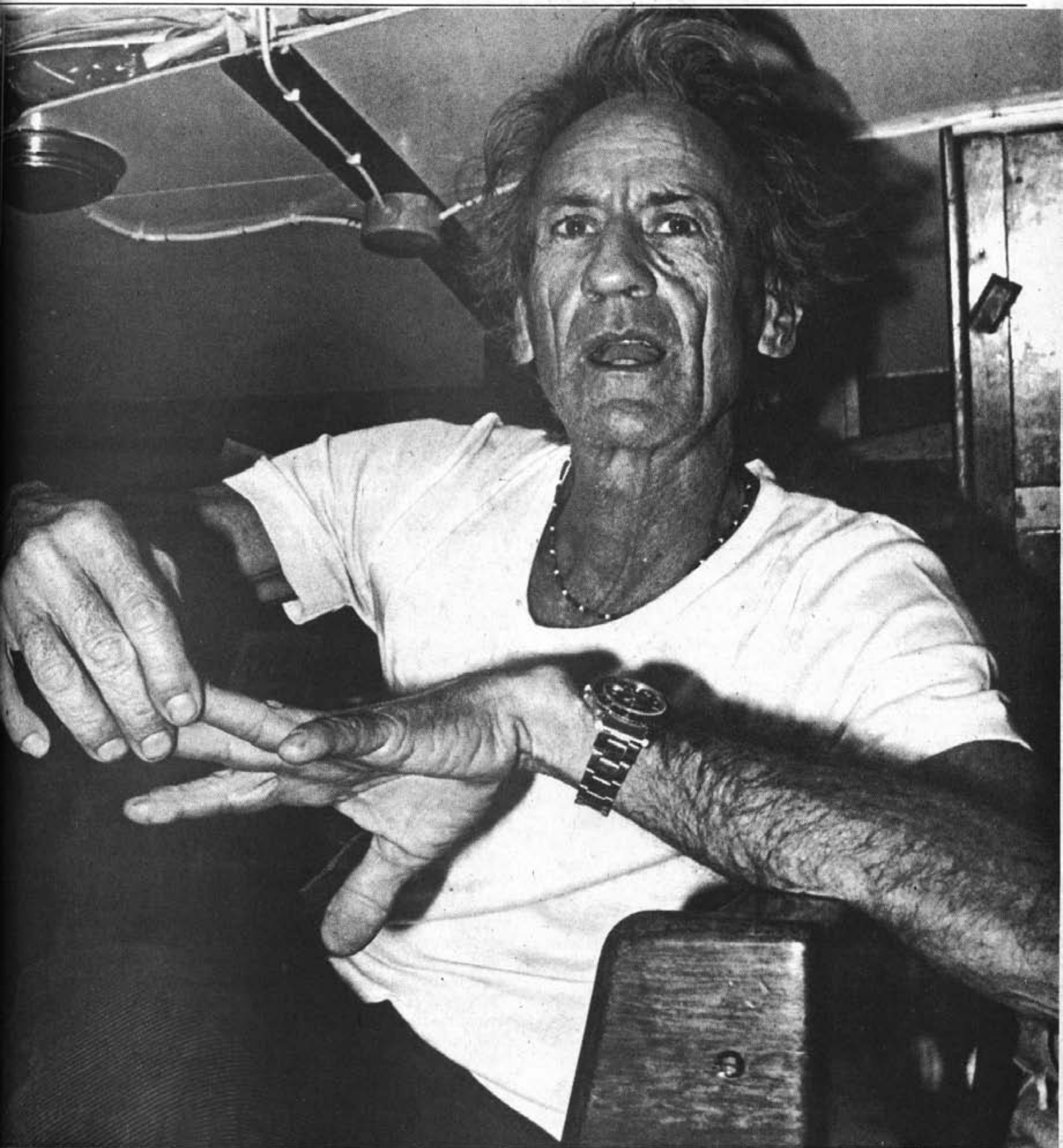


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that was on the message. I just didn't feel like going back, going back into all that shit. Publicity, media, you-know, when they want to make you some kind of hero they drive you just crazy.

Their way of thinking is wrong to me. It's no good trying to make a hero of somebody because it's too easy. And that's what would have happened to me. I knew that very few boats would succeed in round-





ing those three Capes without something that would make them have to stop. There was a journalist asking me, before I left, who I thought would win the race and it made me mad. I told him, "Any guy who will have gone around those three Capes will be a winner anyway, even if seven of us arrive or even two or three, so don't talk about it." There are different rules of the game when you go on such

a trip. That's the fight against the 'dragon'.

38: Bernard?

Moitessier: I didn't know I was going to fight against the 'dragon', which is the second aspect of the trip, the spiritual part.

The physical part is that you must be very careful and be as good a sailor as you can. You have to make every little repair, you have to

make it immediately so that your boat is brand new any time of the day.

For example, one day it was a flat calm off the Cape of Good Hope, and I was doing some repair work on the mizzen boom with a marlinspike, perhaps on some line which had chafed. The spike fell into the water and I instantly jumped in and got it back before it sank out of sight; so my boat was still new. You see, I didn't even have to think to do this. I had a spare spike, but still the physical side reacted. The physical side of the trip was to do all things necessary to bring the boat back.

38: On the spiritual side, what is the 'dragon'? Is it personal to you or is it a 'dragon' everyone must confront?

Moitessier: What is the dragon? . . . it is . . . so difficult to explain, for two years I tried to write about it . . .

38: It's not a specific dragon from mythology?

Moitessier: We all have to fight against something, and if we don't fight against that something, we never . . .

38: Never live?

Moitessier: No, if we don't fight against that something we never evolve. We just stay what we are which means we just stay a bunch of monkeys. We have to fight against something that is bigger than us; we have to create something bigger than our little selves . . . but it is so difficult to express don't bother about it.

38: You named your boat after Joshua Slocum?

Moitessier: Yes, I have an immense respect for that man, an immense respect. His is the first English book (*Sailing Alone Around the World*) that I read. I could only understand one word in every three at the start of the book, heh, heh, and little by little I could read practically fluently. That book is so good!

38: Did you put tacks on your deck when you went around Cape Horn?

Moitessier: Naw. You know, Slocum really opened the road. He was such a super sailor. He just opened the road for all of us. He was over 50.

38: And a sea captain.

Moitessier: Yes, he was the skipper of big ships. But it was just unbelievable that a small boat could do it at that time. Incredible. He was such a great seaman. He opened the road just to prove it could be done in such a small vessel and to show *how* you could do it.

38: Were there times when you thought you communicated with him?

38: No, but I think of that man when I sail. You know, you have to think of that man.

38: Did you start sensing currents like Slocum could?

Moitessier: No, those type of sailors are gone now. Unfortunately it is past. Oh, sure, you can sense some things, but not like those sailors. Now, ha, ha, we have WWV. You know, you turn your radio on and you know what is going to happen, more or less. But they had to watch, they had to watch everything, they were so aware of everything. That was such an important part of my voyage. I had to be aware of everything if I wanted to succeed. That also was part of the fight with the dragon, ha, ha, ha.

38: I was wondering when you'd get back to that.

Moitessier: Ha, ha, it's so nice to just lay on your bunk with a fantastic book, but you also have to be aware of what must be done on deck. Then it starts to become a dance with life, because there are rhythms. You have to be so aware that everything must work good from beginning to end and stay on a high level of quality. That's what you are looking for, and it is a nice game. You could get very high

playing that game, and that is how I could stay at sea that long.

38: Some sailors become uncomfortable too long on land. Do you?

Moitessier: No, now I feel quite comfortable on shore. I still like to sail, of course, but it is different now than before.

38: You say you are very lazy. Some others who have changed sails two or three times during the night might disagree.

Moitessier: Well, of course, this has happened to me, changing sails three or four times during the night. I used to be always under-canvased early. Whenever the weather became menacing I would start reducing sail. Then I would be prepared for anything.

You know, I think one of the most beautiful books that has been written about the sea is called *The Mirror of the Sea* by Joseph Conrad. He is explaining to you, poetically, the difference between what we call the "Roaring Forties" and the Tradewinds. The Roaring Forties, Conrad compares to a very, very strong King getting angry very fast. Nothing sneaky or subtle. A straightforward tyrant. The tradewinds are another tyrant but a sneaky one. They smile to you, and suddenly try to knife you in the back.

38: Lulling you into security?

Moitessier: Yes, and then, "POW!" You get a big squall. Yeah, the whole game is very different in the high latitudes. The high latitudes are sometimes very hard, but always straightforward. There are a few secrets to sailing there, heh, heh. I think it is important to have a boat, not too heavy, and to have the ability to have almost no sail, but always some sail, just to stay maneuverable.

38: Never bare poles?

Moitessier: No, because with bare poles you cannot control the steering. You need just a little speed to get headway so the rudder will obey and then it's OK. I ran under bare poles the first trip for five or six days and I was totally exhausted because on each wave you have to go the same speed with the wave then turn fifteen degrees so you wouldn't pitchpole. Then you broach a little bit and then you have to get enough speed to try to maneuver, because if you get caught sideways in the Roaring Forties you are just rolled over, that's all. You must not get caught sideways in a gale by a breaker, you cannot heave to, you cannot do anything, you'll just get rolled over.

38: So you have to run?

Moitessier: Yes, you have to run, but not fast. I am speaking of cruising type boats, now. Racing boats have done this, you know, and they may think totally different. I don't pretend to know everything.

38: Given the 40-foot size of your boat, what size waves are we talking about where you risk pitchpoling regularly?

Moitessier: On a heavy boat it is quite easy to pitchpole, quite easy, in the Roaring Forties.

38: In the average swell of a gale?

Moitessier: No, not quite in the average swell of the gale. But if the gale is a little bit strong you can pitchpole in a heavy boat running deadwind. You start surfing on the waves which are very, very steep, then you can pitchpole. That almost happened to Joshua. Just "real almost." Then I understood that I must never be dead ahead of a following wave in the Roaring Forties.

"I have seen the *Sandy Fjord* with my own eyes in Capetown, and let me say you could take five boats the size of my *Joshua* and put them in the *Sandy Fjord* and still have room left over. This is a real enormous Colin Archer which had pitchpoled! So, you know, I don't know about these guys who race around the world, heh, heh . . . they go *fast!* But there is always somebody at the helm, that is condi-

tion number one. If you could always be at the helm you could go a little faster on *Joshua* but not much. But the racing boats are different, they are bigger, much lighter and they go very fast.

38: Allard Coles talks about this also, in *Heavy Weather Sailing*.

Moitessier: Yes, with a heavy cruising boat I think that you must avoid the surfing because surfing means a lot of speed and if you hit a steep wave you just go into it. On a racing boat, with someone on the helm, you can play with every wave.

38: If a heavy boat is dangerous because it might pitchpole, would you have liked a lighter boat?

Moitessier: Yes. I'm sure the lighter you are the better it is, I think so, I just think so in rough seas.

38: How light is light — very, very light?

Moitessier: Well, the boat must be strong, steel or maybe aluminum. I mean a very strong boat but light. *Joshua* displaces 15 tons on 40-ft., and by light I mean maybe 10 or 12 tons would have been better.

38: Who steered your boat while you slept?

Moitessier: I didn't steer my boat at all during that whole ten months except for maybe a few hours. I was on self-steering all the time except for a very few occasions when the wind vane broke. But I had several spare wind vanes so that I could immediately put on a new one.

38: What part of your vane broke?

Moitessier: My wind vane is a broomstick and a plate of very light plywood, heh, heh. I can do that because I have an outside rudder which is simpler. When you have an inside rudder the self steering device becomes much more complicated.

38: Bernard, tell us why a steel boat?

Moitessier: After I lost *Marie Therese II*, I worked three or four months on a tanker so I could study steel and begin to understand it. What I found out about steel, rightfully, was that anybody could maintain a steel boat without any headaches. If you have a scrubber, a wire brush and paint you can maintain it easily. It is totally dry, it is very, very strong. If you don't make it fancy, and don't put any wood on top of the steel, practically nothing goes wrong. It is very simple material.

I saw Irving Johnson's *Yankee* in France and I was very impressed. I wanted to ask him if he would build a steel boat again. As it turned out Irving Johnson has been very, very nice to me. Very nice. I was one of these little guys who likes to come up and ask questions of people. He started explaining to me why steel is better than wood. He told me that about every ten years there is an improvement in chemistry that makes the protection of steel improve. It improves regularly. We know more and more about how to deal with corrosion. With wood it is just the opposite. You have less and less good timber and it requires a lot of skill to build a good wood boat. But it doesn't require a lot of skill to make a good, strong steel hull. There are many, many welders but there are not many shipwrights. And, again, you don't have the wood nowadays. Before you were building boats with wood which had been lying in the mud for ten years then dried in the shed for another twenty years, heh, heh. And, of course, those people who loved doing their job.

38: What kind of meals would you prepare at sea. What is your regular fare?

Moitessier: A lot of rice. I used to eat rice with almost every meal. I am really not a good cook, you know, So it is tinned food, tinned meat, corned beef, things like that.

38: No crepes suzette after dinner?

Moitessier: Ha, ha, ha, no, I am a terribly bad cook, just terrible.

38: What kind of stove do you use?

Moitessier: A Radius, kerosene. It can use Primus burners as well.

38: Any trouble with it?

Moitessier: None.

38: Do you clean your stove at sea often?

Moitessier: Oh, yeah, I have to change burners about every three months. You need a few burners. You need to be well equipped. I have a little gas camping stove as well, which was very nice for making hot chocolate, coffee.

38: Did you have any problems priming the kerosene stove at sea?

Moitessier: Well, what I do, my stove has no gimbals. I put a small ring of asbestos in the cup below the burner and the alcohol doesn't slosh out.

Once, heh, heh, I had to drill a little hole in the handle of the burner to accommodate the Primus burner. Instead of doing it straightaway, I decided to put it off for some reason; maybe I had worked on deck to change a lashing or something. But I was tired and I decided to rest instead of drilling the hole. This was two months before I arrived in Tahiti, in the middle of the Indian Ocean and without the kerosene stove I couldn't make any rice. You know, a pressure cooker of rice is a 2 day supply. I could use the small camp stove but I didn't have that many gas bottles left and it takes a lot of gas to cook that much rice. So I had to eat mashed potatoes, you know, you mix with a little boiling water. Powdered, you have that, here?

38: Yes, we call it "instant."

Moitessier: Is it available? I like that stuff. So without drilling that tiny little hole in the handle of the burner I started eating less nourishing food. That was the problem. Suddenly, for the first time on the whole trip, I realized that I had lost the baraka.

38: What is that, the baraka?

Moitessier: The baraka is when everything goes fine, whatever the conditions are. Remember this fight against the dragon? Well,

Son, Stephen.



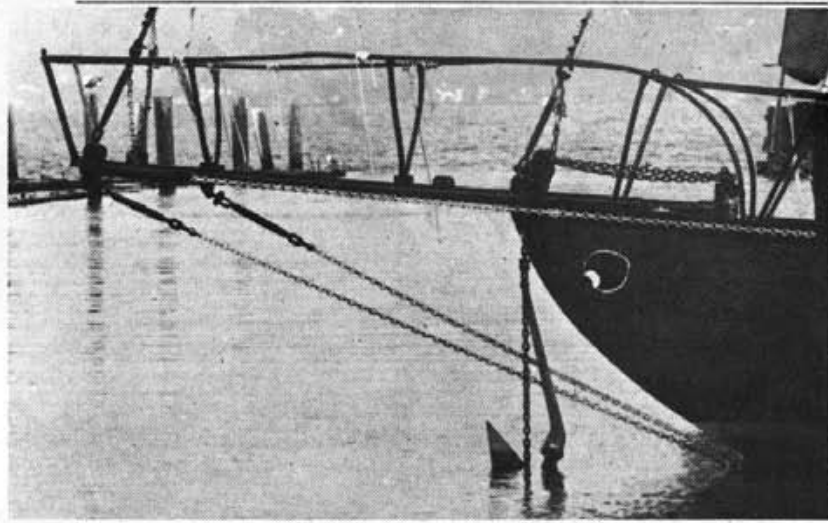
Wife, Helene.



BERNARD'S BOAT

We wandered down to Bernard's boat on Christmas Eve to take some photographs to illustrate Frank DiMarco's interview. Bernard, his wife Helene, and their nine-year old

hull bright red; her decks white; and her steel cleats, stanchions, handrails, bowsprit, turnbuckles and pulpits are painted black. She looks simple, solid, and slow.



It's a long walk to the jib tack.



Bernard's Joshua.

son Stephen were all there preparing to visit friends in El Cerrito. Nevertheless they invited us aboard to take a few shots and have a look around the boat.

Joshua is almost 20 years old. She's no sleek beauty, and there's been no attempt to hide the fact. Her bottom is a dark color; her

Appearances are not important to Bernard, not important like economy, simplicity, and freedom from maintenance. We learned this while talking about his masts.

"Say, what are those made of Bernard?"

"The main mast is pine, and the mizzen is a telephone pole."

"A telephone pole."

"It's very simple and costs very little. It's as old as the boat."

"Is it treated with anything?"

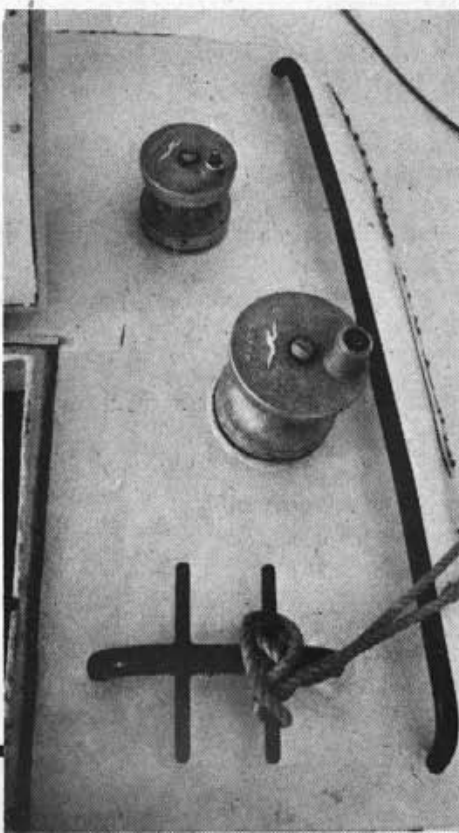
"They put creosote on them when they're made."

"Bernard, does it look to you like the

Staysail halyard shackle.



Goit winches on the cabintop.



masts need maybe a little paint?"

"No. I painted them last in 1974. I don't ask much of masts, just that they don't rot on me. I did have some problems with the pine mast, it cracked a bit and so water was pouring down into the cabin through the crack. But I fixed that."

As we continued discussing the boat, Bernard went on to explain that he did not ask things to be pretty, just functional. He said, "Life is too short to have to stop and do things which are not really necessary for the boat; otherwise all your time would be spent working on your boat and you don't have time to do things which are important. It's important that the boat works and stays in

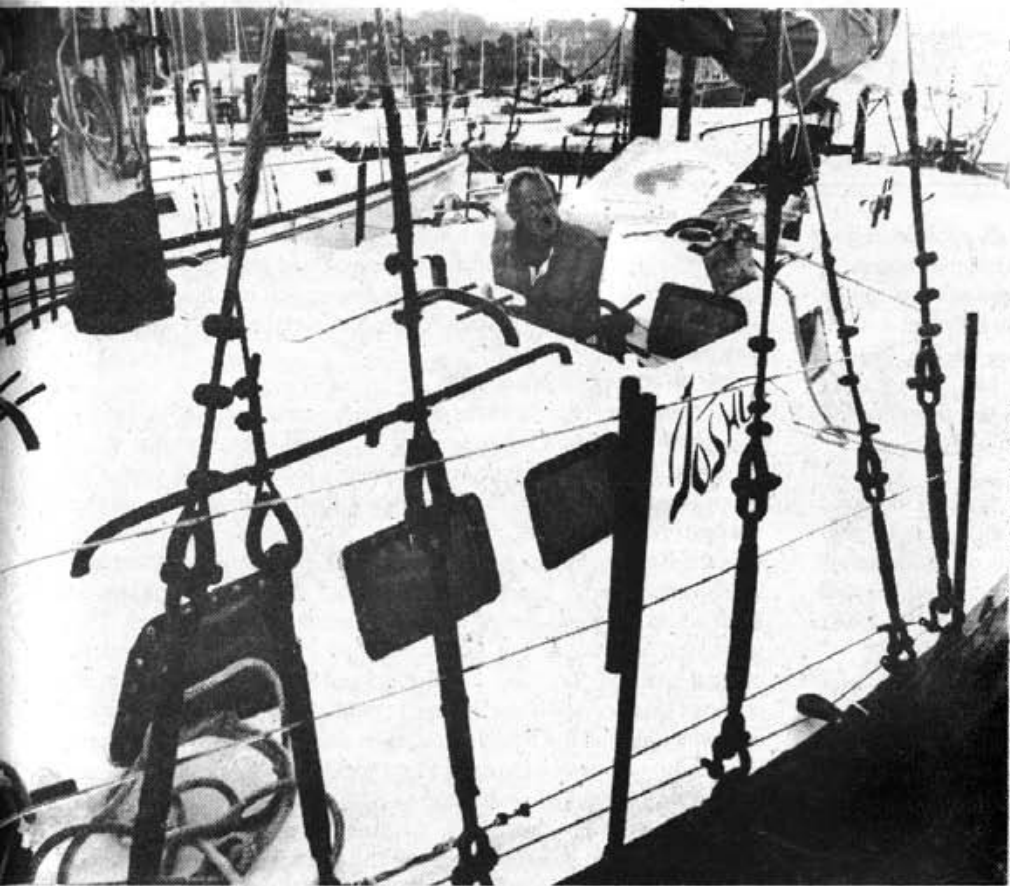


PHOTO BY WILLIAM RODARMOR. ALL OTHERS BY LATITUDE 38

good shape, but when that is attained, O.K., stop it."

What is meant by 'good shape' is a relative thing, and thus we've printed some shots of Bernard's boat to illustrate what he means. You might be shocked by what may appear to be the mediocre condition of some gear, but we weren't. Over the last few years we've learned over and over again that the latest equipment is terrific and helpful, but powerful will can compensate for the lack of it. It's like the British say, 'it's not the boats that count, it's the men in them.'

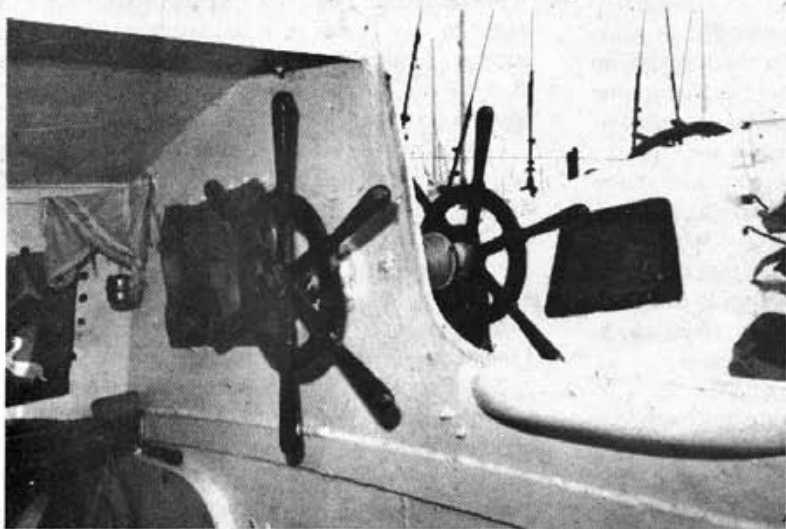
We find this to be an encouraging message, and feel it's Bernard's inspiration. You folks who want to go cruising don't need the latest boat; you don't need the latest in roller-furling headsails and mains; you don't need refrigerators and electric windlasses; you don't need the most expensive shackles and marine hardware. All of these are nice, but experience at sea and the ability to work with what's available and sheer desire can make up for all of them. It's an un-American perspective to sailing, but Bernard has demonstrated that it's not unworkable or unsatisfying.

— latitude 38



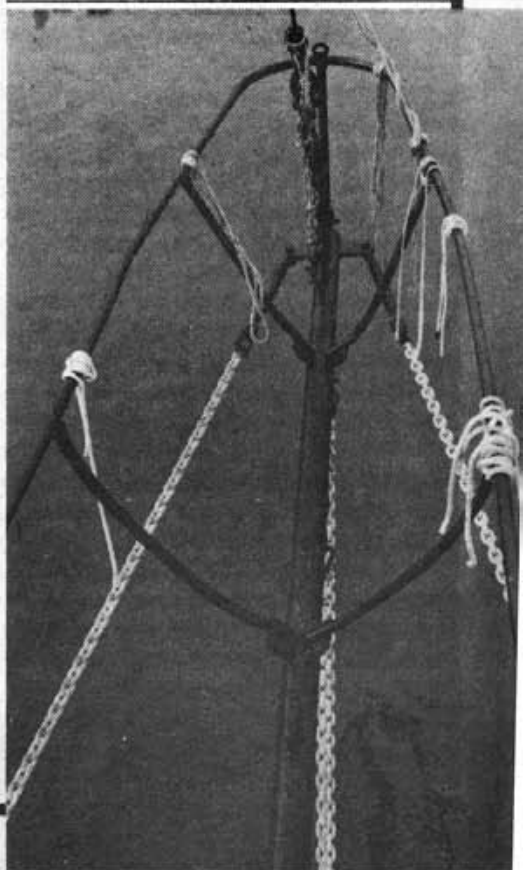
Joshua's small, efficient galley.

(Above left) Bernard's companionway canopy.



Inside and outside steering stations.

Joshua's bowsprit has holes in it.



there are other legends, Greek legends. The baraka was when a god of Olympus falls in love with a human, he likes what that human is trying to do, and things become really, really perfect. Your senses are very aware and then you pass to some slightly different dimension. That was one of the Greek legends. I lost, ha, ha, ho, ho, the baraka the day I didn't drill that little hole, heh, heh. The god of Olympus was no longer in love with me because I had been waiting for him to drill that little hole instead of doing it myself.

38: You mean the ol' merde hit the fan?

Moitessier: Ha, ha, I got knocked down five times before I made it to Tahiti. It was *much* harder for me and there was no way for me to drill that bloody hole. It was too late, I was on a low reef *all* the time, and the sea was too rough. I would have broken the drill and I was too tired anyway. I needed to eat well and I couldn't. It was just too late and the god had gone away.

It was pure chance later, when I was on deck, that I understood physically why I got knocked down. That is it happened when I was surfing sideways a little too much, a little bit too much speed, and then you heel . . . sideways a little too much, a little bit too much speed, and then you heel . . . and . . . phffghtz!! The sea *has* to be watched, heh, heh.

38! And your mast goes in the water?

Moitessier: No, not the time I was on deck. But I understood the principle, how it had happened before. Everytime before had been at night and I was inside the cabin. It was very hard work to Tahiti. And my last knockdown, ha, ha, was my biggest. It was 34 degrees South. It was a huge one.

38: What sails did you have up?

Moitessier: Only a small jib, 55 square feet, and a small staysail of 65 square feet. The main was down and so was the mizzen. I had torn the mizzen earlier by not reefing it soon enough. It was the first sail I had messed up and; it was just ten days before reaching Tahiti.

38: Tell us about your boat.

Moitessier: She's eighteen years old, and was designed by Jean Knockor, a French naval architect who is still alive. She's a double-ender, but not a Colin Archer. *Joshua* is 40-ft. long, with a 7-foot bowsprit and is about 34-ft. on the waterline. Her beam is 10½-ft.; her mainmast is just over 50-ft. off the deck; both masts are wood. *Joshua* displaces 15 tons, her hull and decks are steel. She has a one-cylinder diesel engine, very simple, no reverse and a centrifugal clutch.

38: You like the ketch rig?

Moitessier: Yes, the ketch is something unbelievable. A ketch can run safely downwind with only the mizzen. No main, no jib, no staysail. You can heave to with just the mizzen and the tiller to one side. But I prefer a little bit of main and a head sail to windward.

38: Have you ever had to change your mainsail at sea?

Moitessier: Yes. Once, er, twice. No, actually three times altogether. Only once I had to take it off because I had split it in half. But it was good weather. The sail had been flapping against a stay and there was just a little bit of wire sticking out. And that little thing . . . well, it worked on the sail all night. When I got up to piss I saw stars through the main, heh, heh, heh. So I pulled it down and in calm weather it was a full day's work sewing it up by hand.

38: What about trimming sails on *Joshua*?

Moitessier: I have the winches very close to the hatch so I just put my head and shoulders out and can trim my sails.

38: And the halyards?

Moitessier: The halyards are secured at the bottom of the mast,

I don't need to control them from the cockpit. Keep in mind that when you go forward to drop a main you are normally dropping a reefed main and not a full main. You know, you can time it between waves. Normally I could walk forward in security but I was always watching the sea. Always.

38: Were you clipped on?

Moitessier: No, only when I had something to do at the bowsprit and it was a little bit rough — changing to a smaller jib, for example. I don't like a harness normally. I feel clumsy in one. Only when I had to spend more time forward than usual. More time than between two waves, ha, ha, ha, ha.

In the Roaring Forties you always have to be aware, grabbing hand holds, for example. Standing on the cabin sometimes your legs are lifted when the wave comes. That has happened; no fun at all. They were not bad waves but you would get completely wet and the cockpit was full, ho, ho, and the sextant would be floating in the cockpit. Under conditions like this I could also jump into the companionway and pull the hatch closed over my head. I had a seat there, too, and could look out ready to go topside immediately.

38: Any other sail problems?

Moitessier: Ho, ho, I blew the main on a jibe. I was jibing but I had no mizzen to protect the main. The mizzen is a very, very good sail for jibing because it covers the main so it will pass nicely. Just ripped it to shreds. But the material was gone from all the sun. It happened only *eight* days before reaching Tahiti. But I had a spare main, of course.

38: What do you have on there now?

Moitessier: I don't know. It is something. A friend of mine who is a sailmaker in Hawaii made it for me. Well-designed, well-made. We only disagreed on one thing. He wanted me to have a sail without battens. But I wanted as much curve in the leech as possible because I have so much mast.

One of the big, big problems with sailmakers these days is that they use a thread which is too thin and they tell you you are an idiot because only the thin thread is good. They are convinced it is strong and it is not, I'm sorry. You need thick thread. Three rows of thick thread and then you have something that really lasts. Durability, uniform durability. The perfect, perfect sail, when getting too old, would almost totally disintegrate at once. No weak parts, you understand. That would be the "perfect sail," for a joke, of course.

38: Do you have reef points in your staysail?

Moitessier: Yes, two sets. In singlehanding it's much, much easier to take a reef in a staysail than taking it in and pulling up another, smaller staysail. The staysail is much easier to work with than the jib. The clew to reef the jib is definitely *out* of the boat. You have to go to the bowsprit besides.

I prefer not to reef the jib unless I have no other choice and then you want to do it well in advance of bad weather. I had a genoa up all the way down to the Roaring Forties and then replaced it with a smaller jib. The genoa never went up again until I was back in the Tradewinds near Tahiti.

38: Where do you go from here?

Moitessier: From here? I just arrived! Anywhere I drop my hook I might stay for years, ha, ha!

38: People have been asking about your book, *The Long Way*.

Moitessier: Yes, it is out of print. Maybe Doubleday will print it again. Who knows, publishers have their problems, that is their baby. But you know, there are many, many important books to read. My book is just a book of a monkey trying to talk, ho, ha, ha. It is so dif-

ficult to write. All I can do is my best, that's all.

38: Do you think you might write another book here in Sausalito?

Moitessier: No, I think, for me, this is more of an environment for lecturing with my film, communicating with people. I've written many of the yacht clubs around here for this purpose.

38: You don't feel like writing now?

Moitessier: No, the doing is more important than the writing. Part of the doing is to show the film, to talk with people, meet people, to exchange impressions. The doing is more important because everything has been written by Shakespeare, by Homer, ha, ha, heh, by huge people.

38: How much reading do you do while you are underway?

Moitessier: Not many books, but real good, enriching ones. I read *East of Eden* twice and *Zorba* twice during the last voyage. I slowly read important books like Steinbeck. *The Jungle Book* by Kipling. My mother read that book to us when I was a child.

38: When you were growing up was there any influence on your life by matters of the sea?

Moitessier: I was born in Viet Nam and I lived 27 years there. Every year we would spend three months on the Gulf of Siam and I was always with the Vietnamese fishermen.

38: What kind of vessels?

Moitessier: Oh, everything, but super simple. The cleats I have on *Joshua* are inspired by the cleats they use. When I left Viet Nam, I had never seen a "yacht" in my life.

38: So part of you is really Southeast Asian.

Moitessier: Yes, my second mother was Chinese. When I was born, my mother needed someone to help her and she found that Chinese girl. She was still there when we left 27 years after. She was my second mother. They are very interesting people, the Chinese.

You know, Chinese is the only living language which is universal in its written form? It means that one symbol will mean the same thing for anyone who knows that symbol. For example, in China you can have ten people sitting around a table and no one understands what the other is saying, but they can communicate in symbols. In Chinese, the symbol of the heart and the symbol of the spirit are the same. A fascinating language. I am trying, in my monkey way, to teach my son.

With 200 symbols you can make an entire written language by combining two or more. For example, when you combine the symbols for "sun" and "moon", it becomes "brilliant". But the symbol of "white" below these and you have the symbol for "understand". We were speaking of lack of communication earlier. I think the Chinese can be so creative that the western world should learn to communicate with them. With 200 words you can communicate in the first degree. I knew less, maybe 150 words of Malaysian and I could communicate. It is true of any language.

38: Do you think the West can join the East?

Moitessier: Yes. What is good about Chinese is that they are a pacific people. They are really trying to create their country. They participate in the creation of something. They are together.

38: Bernard, will you tell us the story of the fruit trees?

Moitessier: It is difficult to explain that story in just a few words but I will try.

While I was in Tahiti I wrote letters to newspapers in France and tried to put over the idea of planting fruit trees along the highways, parks, etc. which would be the symbol of something simple and generous, a real participation in the creation. (Here is a translation of the letter which appeared in *Le Figaro* on April 23, 1980):

"I submit to you what I believe is a good idea, like something I have seen in a dream: to plant fruit trees along the streets of our towns, along all our roads and paths, in all our public parks, and even in our forests for the qualities offering fine wood for construction and furniture, as well as edible fruits. For a fruit tree offers needed shade and greenery along with its fruits.

But above all this, these fruit trees, which would belong to everyone (including the birds and bees), without ownership by any particular person, would represent a symbol for the era of evolution which we must enter if we want to succeed in the building of the country and our planet.

These fruit trees, while growing, could serve as a real and non-verbal participation in the creation of something much greater than our little selves, something generous and simple, which would help in uniting mankind in the spirit of an evolution of the wisdom of the heart.

Mankind has built cathedrals. A country where the roads and walkways and streets were lined with fruit trees would, I believe, be even more beautiful than the most beautiful cathedral imaginable."

Extremely simple. A marriage of conscious thinking and conscious action which gives birth to something very simple. A step toward the intelligence of the heart, not the intelligence of the computer. We are all so busy fighting this and that, the pollution, the overfishing, etc.; but we never fight what we should go after: human stupidity. We never fight against the roots of pollution, the roots of over-technology.

38: The response to your letters?

Moitessier: At the end of the letters, I said: "I make \$3,000 available to the first mayor who will decide to use my gift in the spirit of this letter." You understand, to make it work I had to put more than words in it. I had to put an act in it. And I got about sixty replies. The first one I received got the \$3,000. The responses came in over a period of months and it was a lot of work answering them all.

38: Did the Mayor invite you to the winning town?

Moitessier: Yes, but that is not important. Besides, I was in Tahiti at the time and he was in France.

38: You conducted this campaign from aboard *Joshua*?

Moitessier: Yes, it was about five months of work, solid writing. A lot of letters typed on my boat, I was trying to make the media get interested.

It's funny, a long time ago in ancient Greece everything depended on the population and the population depended on the "word", edicts, news, rumor, etc. Now it is much the same. And if the media is fucked then you know where the population stands.

All this fruit tree idea symbolizes that man can evolve only if he participates in the creation of the world. He cannot evolve just by sitting, or talking, or thinking by himself or giving advice. He must do things, not only talk about it. 'Doing things', for me, means participating in the creation of the world. It may seem strange that my ten months solo voyage could bring me to that fruit tree story, yet it is just the continuation of the same story . . . the fight against the dragon . . . the fight against the Original Sin, that is all this fruit tree story means to me. And we have the choice between "doing it" and "not doing it". Very simple. That is just what I said to the sixty Mayors; it is only a question of choice.