

which were anchored in the Salomons. This atoll serves as a way station for yachts crossing the Indian Ocean. For a \$70 fee yachts are allowed to anchor for several months. Having chatted with a few of the yachters on Boddam, we learned that some yachters sail to BIOT, stay up to six months, and then simply return again after resupplying in Malaysia or Thailand. With E-mail available nowadays via short wave, yachters can easily stay in touch with the outside world even from somewhere as remote as BIOT.

Yachters sometimes congregate on Boddam Island in the evening in order to barbecue and socialize, and perhaps once a month the British coast guard sponsors a barbecue for all yachters present. There is a volleyball court, a swing made from rope and a half of a coconut shell and even a picnic table.

Although fishing is allowed in BIOT, diving is not. Regulations are enforced by and yacht fees are collected by the British coast guard which calls in at the Salomon Islands from time to time. We felt fortunate that Andy, a coast guard official, called on us the morning of 22 July because he stamped our passports!

Andy clearly was not looking for trouble when he boarded our yacht. He commented that, if we had any dive tanks on board, he didn't want to see them. I believe that anyone who had dived in the Salomon Islands would have said that it was the most fantastic dive he had ever taken since the water was so very clear.

After disembarking from our yacht, Andy returned to his coast guard vessel and sailed out of the Salomon Islands atoll in search of commercial vessels fishing in BIOT waters. He

was also charged with inspecting these vessels.

On the afternoon of 22 July we rode our yacht's small motorboat from our anchorage near Boddam Island around the rest of the atoll. After landing on Takamaka Island we saw a ray swimming in the crystal clear water. Before returning to our own yacht across the lagoon, we halted to swim and snorkel at the site where another yacht had recently sunk. The sunken yacht's two white masts rose at an awkward angle out of the blue green waters of the Salomon Islands lagoon. We could see that a PC and other personal belongings were still aboard the sunken yacht, which bore a hole in its fiberglass hull.

Arriving back on the Dream Voyager, we found a Frenchman and his daughter from another yacht on board our own yacht sipping tea with our crew. They related to us the story of the sinking of the yacht in the lagoon two weeks previously. The family which owned it was then still in the lagoon, living aboard another boat with some friends.

The prevailing southeasterly wind assisted us on our northbound journey from the Salomon Islands in BIOT to Addu Atoll in the Maldives, so the return sailing took only about 38 hours. Upon arrival at Gan on the morning of 24 July, Maldives immigration officers boarded the Dream Voyager in order to clear us. Then we took a short driving tour of Gan before flying back to Male on a 50-seater jet aircraft.

At the end of the 6-day Expedition



Charles and Jeff flew back to the U. S. that same evening while Ben and I spent the night in Male. I departed Male on Emirates to Dubai early on the morning of 28 July and arrived back home in Cairo that same afternoon – one very remote destination ycher!

For more information about the TCC and about my extreme travel hobby, please visit [www.eptours.com](http://www.eptours.com) and refer to World Travel Club. The web site features a TCC destination counter, and you can see where you rank compared to others who have registered their destinations on my site.

Pictures: From page one, left to right—

- Expedition members flew from Male, the capital, south to the Gan on Addu, the southernmost atoll in the Maldives. Gan near the equator, was formerly a British air base. Because the British had built causeways between several of the islands near the base, Addu boasts the longest continuous stretch of roadway in the Maldives!
- Expedition members shared anchorage in the Salomon Islands with a dozen other beautiful yachts such as this one.
- The 94-foot air-conditioned sailing yacht Dream Voyager transported the expedition members safely from the Maldives to British Indian Ocean Territory. The yacht carried an 8-man crew.
- On Boddam Island expedition members found a graveyard where some of the tombstones dated back to the nineteenth century. A copra operation was probably in existence from those times until the early 1970's when the island was evacuated.
- Icylic Boddam Beach
- Boddam Island was inhabited for generations by those who worked on the local copra plantation, which provided the only means of employment. These old building stones, evidently manufactured in one of the Commonwealth countries, might have come to the Salomon Islands as part of a ship's ballast.

**ABOUT TED COOKSON:** Egypt's most widely traveled travel agent, Ted has visited 303 of the 317 destinations on the list of the Travelers' Century Club. A travel agent in Cairo since 1986, Ted manages **EGYPT PANORAMA TOURS**, a full-service travel agency, at 4 Road 79 (between Roads 9 and 10, near the "El Maadi" metro station) in Maadi. Contact Egypt Panorama Tours (open 7 days a week 9 AM-5 PM) at: Tels. 359-0200, 358-5880, 359-1301. Fax 359-1199. E-mail: [ept@link.net](mailto:ept@link.net) Web site: [www.eptours.com](http://www.eptours.com). (Password for residents: eptcool)