

Dear friends,

We wish you a MERRY CHRISTMAS and HAPPY NEW YEAR

The best wishes for a lovely 2012

We spend January and most of February in Panama at anchor just outside the Canal. We sailed through the Canal from the Atlantic side to the Pacific as line handlers onboard the French boat Alter. A great way to see the famous Panama Canal, and we had a nice time together with Jacqueline and Patrice, who we meet again at Gambier.

We left Panama in the end of February, made a short stop at Las Perlas to clean the bottom, before we set off for Gambier. It was a slow sailing, there was not much wind. It took us 40 days to sail the 4150 nm down to Gambier. So we were happy when we drop the anchor outside Rigitera, the main village on Gambier. We stayed there for one month, and had some good walks on the island. Again we meet up with Jackie and Noel.



After Gambier we sailed up along the Tuamotu Atolls. The first atoll was Hao. It is a big atoll, with only one small pass, where all the water is passing in and out with the tides. It was very exciting to go through the pass. After Hao we visited Tahanea and Fakarava, where we also had very nice walking and snorkeling.

We were ready to lift the anchor and leave Fakarava, when the engine said bang and the engine room was filled with smoke. The problem was the Exhaust Manifold/Heat Exchanger, it was broken where it was connected to the engine. We ordered a new one in England. Two weeks later, when we were sure, it was on

its way to Papeete, we left Fakarava for sail. Without engine it was quite exciting to sail though the pass of Fakarava. But everything went fine and we anchored at Point Venus at Tahiti two days later.

We were so lucky, when we arrived at Papeete our friends Francios and Francine had a mooring ready for us. After 3 weeks we were ready to leave Tahiti with a working engine. We visited Moorea, Raiatea, Tahaa and Bora Bora, before we in the middle of August left French Polynesia. We had plans visiting Beveridge Reef and Neui on our way to Tonga, but bad weather did, that we had to pass both places, and sail direct to Tonga.

We spend 2 months in Tonga. There are a lot of good protected anchor places around Vava'u and we visited many of them. Lene was out swimming with the Humpback whales, a great experience. And we did a lot of kayaking. In Neiafu, the main village in the Vava'u group, we were at a mooring and enjoyed the festival, which lasted a week. Under the festival there were people from New Zealand to tell about the facilities down there. A good option for us to get information about our next destination. After Vava'u we went down to the Ha'apai group, the central part of the 3 Tonga islands groups. Ha'apai is well known for its beautiful beaches and reefs. Also here we had the joy of the Humpback whales close by.



We left Tonga from Nuku'alofa, Tongas capital, in the Tongatapu group, and headed for Minerva Reef and Opuia in New Zealand.

Minerva Reef was great. Anchoring in the middle of Pacific, only protected by a low reef, which almost disappeared at high tide was fantastic. We walked on the reef at low tide, and saw a lot of fish and corals when we were snorkeling.

We are now in NZ and will stay here in the hurricane season. Dana is haul out next week in Wangarei. We need to do a lot of work on the hull. We have bought a car, and hope to see some part of New Zealand. We enjoy very much being here.

Kind regards

Lene & Henrik