

Excerpts from the Log of the Vayu 1969-1970

NICK, *The following narrations describe several legs of a trip that I took when I was 19/20 years old. I sailed from Naples, Italy with a high school friend, Doug Hayes, down the coast, through the straits of Messina up the “instep” of Italy to Punta Alice and then crossed over to Gallipoli. Doug had to leave but I was joined by Dad and Brad and then sailed the short distance down to Santa Maria DeLueca. We then crossed over to Greece (the island of Lefkas) and then North to Corfu where I left the boat. The next leg was the following year when I took the boat south down the Ionian and then east through the gulf of Patras to the Corinth canal and then on to Pireus.*

Part of your trip will include the same route that I sailed but in reverse order. I hope you enjoy reading my unabridged (though grammar and spelling was corrected) log, essentially as I wrote it. The thoughts and expressions are those of a 19-year-old kid who loves sailing and Greece, perhaps you may find some parallels. The log picks up with the departure from Gallipoli.

AUGUST 1969

After Doug left to go back to school I stayed in Gallipoli for four or five days. I spent a lot of that time by going out with the local fishermen to catch octopus. We also did some night fishing using very bright propane lights. Neat stuff and I got to keep some of the octopus.

Dad, Mom and Brad drove down from Naples in the Lancia on Saturday and brought me some greatly needed supplies, peanut butter, Yes!. I was really tired of octopus and rice. The Vayu was loaded and readied for out trip. Brad, Dad and I got a bag of peanuts to celebrate the beginning of the next leg of the voyage of the Vayu.

On Sunday Dad and Mom drove down to Santa Maria DeLueca. Meanwhile, Brad and I began our sail from Gallipoli to Santa Maria DeLeuca. (27nm). The wind was from the N.W. about 10 knots and we sailed south along the low rocky coast.

About 10 miles from our destination, we saw what looked like a telephone pole sticking out of the water. When we checked it out we found that it was the mast of a sunken coastal steamer. It had gone down shortly before and there were all sorts of treasures still in the wreck. The ship which had been carrying cement, was laying at the edge of a shoal called Secche d'Ugenta. It had a big hole in its side where it had struck the shoal. Brad and I took turns diving down into the main cabin and we salvaged a lot of fittings and utensils.

While we were diving, we had put out a fishing line in the hopes of catching something to eat. Unfortunately, when we unwedged the bronze headed hammer that the line was attached to, to check our catch, something jerked the line and hammer out of my hand. The last sight we had of my prized non-magnetic souvenir from a minesweeper was it scooting along the sandy

bottom headed for deep water. All we could talk about was how big and tasty that fish must have been.

12 year-old Brad decided to climb the mast of the sunken ship to get an overhead picture of the Vayu. That was something I couldn't be persuaded to do, but Brad accepted the challenge with glee! In fact, rather than climb down, he dove. What nerve, what courage, what lack of brains.

We arrived in SMDL in the late afternoon where we met Mom and Dad. Brad, Dad and I decided to start out 70 mile crossing to Corfu the following afternoon. We intended to sail through the night and make landfall the next day. Brad and I spent the night on the Vayu and Dad and Mom stayed in a hotel in town.

On Monday morning, Mom returned to Naples in the Lancia. Dad, Brad and I left port around noon with Brad acting as forward lookout. Ol' eagle eyes had a fine nap and had nothing to report for the rest of the afternoon. There was almost no wind, but as the afternoon wore on, the wind freshened. We raised the sails and with an almost following wind of the W.N.W. we made good time. Brad loves to steer the boat and is a true natural.

The winds did not last, so we spent Monday night with no wind at all. Morning dawned and there was still no wind so our only choice was to motor slowly to conserve fuel. Dad decided to take in the rays "au natural". I took a picture, but for modesty sake, Dad had two choices for a strategic cover, a small box of "Baby Ruths" or a box of "Bravo" soap. The latter was obviously his choice, though the former would have been sufficient. We sunbathed through Tuesday in listless winds. Finally, as the sun set, the winds rose.

That night in mid August, it was brilliantly clear, and the wind was from the N.W. at 15-20 knots. We were treated to the most spectacular display of shooting stars as the Earth passed through the remains of a comet. Most of the shooting stars appeared to originate from the northeastern skies in the constellation of Perseus. According to Dad, this constellation was the "eye test" for many a young Athenian and Spartan. The number of stars they could see in the constellation judged their keenness of eye. This meteor shower happens each August around the 12-15th and has been reported for the last 600 years. We counted more than a hundred shooting stars in a two-hour period. They were all sizes; some changing color as they fell and others bursting into brilliant fragments which left glimmering, shining trails in their wake.

We sailed on thinking we were approaching the northern tip of Corfu. We hadn't realized that in reality the currents and our drift were pushing us further south than we had estimated. Late that night, we could see some reflected light from a small town on the east side of an island that was actually south of Corfu. However, we feared they were from a town on Othani, a small island north of Corfu and near the Albanian boarder. We didn't want to risk sailing too far north and ending up in Albania, so we dropped sail and trailing a long line to keep the bow into the wind we drifted south and slightly west while the wind shifted to almost due north.

By the end of the night we were beat. Try as we might, Brad and I couldn't keep our full attention on the tasks at hand. That morning as I tried to steer with my prehensile toes and nap Dad decided to get a picture of my

“talent”. Considering that to take this picture he had to perch on the edge of the transom like a duck on a wire, perhaps his act would have been a more amusing subject.

By afternoon Dad had retired to nap under a tarp out of the sun. Shortly after he fell asleep, we sighted land through the haze. Dad was immediately alert and concerned that it was Albania. We cautiously approached the coast and I noted a radar dome on the peak of the island. I had seen a similar one when we visited an island 60 miles south of Corfu called Lefkas. Dad was unconvinced. We saw a small boy on the rocky shore fishing. Dad called out to him in Greek and asked what the name of this place was. The boy said “Lefkathos”. We went around the north end of the island along several miles of deserted white, gravel beach. We arrived at the port of Lefkas by way of a canal with large Venetian castles on either side. At last we have arrived in Greece!

Unable to stand the constant ribbing about his navigational skills from his sons, (and seeing them safely in Greece) Dad decided to fly back to Italy. After a day’s rest and some good Greek cooking, Brad and I sailed north to the town of Preveza 8 nm away. Since it was the official port of entry we had to do so in a “timely fashion”. I found that I had been processed in by customs as an “International Yacht” and was entitled to duty free fuel just like an ocean liner! Cool!

Preveza is located on an almost landlocked body of water near the sight of an ancient city called Nikiopolis (city of victory). It was just off shore that a great battle was fought between the naval forces of Octavian, Caesar’s adopted son, and those of Anthony and Cleopatra. We were sailing right through the site of this dramatic battle 2000 years later, to the day! History was very real and present that day. All I could think of was how scared the sailors of both sides must have been and I wondered what the world would have been like had Anthony and Cleopatra, instead of Octavian, won.

On Friday we headed north, stopping at the tiny island of Anti-Paxos (29nm). In a small cove on the southeastern tip we chiseled a small inscription on a seaside cliff. It wasn’t much, just our names and the boat’s name along with the date. I wonder if I will ever be back here again, and with whom.

Late that afternoon we sailed the 6 miles across the narrow channel to Paxos and along the shore to the town of Porto Gayo. The entrance to the harbor was like a fiord and the island was covered with silver olive trees full of buzzing locusts. We spent the rest of the day walking the hot dusty roads of Paxos that wound through vineyards and ancient olive groves. As the sun set we sat in a taverna near the boat, quenching our thirst with cold lemonathas.

The next day, we headed 36 miles north to our next destination, Corfu and then along its west coast. Brad did the coastal navigating and I slept, and bailed most of the day. I suggested that we split the work. Brad eagerly accepted, he would sleep and I could bail. This destination had a special meaning to us. Back in 1936 Dad was traveling around Greece when he was my age and he spent a week camping out at a beautiful cove. He would tell us as little kids how beautiful Greece was, and especially this place on Corfu. Three years before, he took us to Greece and it was the first place we visited renting a villa for two weeks. Now we are returning on our own, independent, keeping the tradition alive.

We spent several days in the beautiful cove of Paleokastritsa. It became quite windy so we decided we would stay a few more days here. While waiting for the weather to clear, Brad managed to sort of jump off a cliff. It seems he was walking *down* a mountain road in pitch darkness when he literally ran into some Greeks going *up* the road. Neither heard the other coming and each thought the other was some sort of wild animal. The Greeks, more familiar with the road, jumped towards the center; Brad however, jumped over the guardrail, fell 30 feet and rolled down the hill. He woke up in a cactus patch. He managed to crawl/stagger down to the beach from his "shortcut". Thinking I was aboard he tried to get my attention by throwing a few rocks at the boat. I wasn't on board but he did managed to pick off the port running light from 60 feet away. In desperation he decided to swim through the salt water to get to the boat. He was furry with beaver tail cactus thorns and the salt just made matters worse. When I finally returned and climbed on board the boat there was this little skinny kid huddled under a tarp looking like nothing so much as a miserable sea urchin.

The following morning we left and sailed north around Corfu 36 miles to the main town. There were early morning thunderstorms all around but we were determined to go. Somewhere to our north, obscured by the storms, was the island of Othani. Suddenly the sun broke through and emerging from the mist and rain was Othani framed in a beautiful rainbow. We took that as a very positive omen. However, our luck didn't hold. As we rounded the island and headed south, I hit an "uncharted" shoal. Fortunately only the centerboard hit and we quickly came about and continued south. Later when I scraped the spaghetti sauce off the chart I found the uncharted shoals.

The wind dropped and we motored the rest of the way to the capital of Corfu, Kerkira. Brad ever alert to danger, manned the helm. We anchored and left the boat just outside of town and went in search of proper food. We purchased some tomatoes and peppers, feta cheese and fresh bread. As we were walking along with the veggies in our hands, A man stopped his car and came back to question us about our suspicious lot of produce. He seemed to think it had been acquired in a less than honest manner. After some friendly discussion he was convinced we were honest if not scruffy tourists.

To make amends for his unfounded charges, he took us to a restaurant and bought us some chocolate mocha sundaes. It seems he was a marine architect and we told him about our adventures on the Vayu. When we told him we had just sailed around the island in the thunderstorms that day he was skeptical. When we told him the Lightning had sailed from Naples, Italy, he was incredulous!

We explained that we need to find a place to leave the boat for the winter but we did not have much money. He was able to find the perfect place at the perfect price, cheap. It was not the most modern of places, but as I left the boat there, I knew that the old fisherman, Michale Mpouas who ran the yard would care for our boat as if it was his own.

School was soon starting and we had to return ...Brad to Naples and I to Munich for my first year of real college. We caught the ferry back to Italy and it was on board the ferry that Brad had his final "adventure". It seems Brad fell asleep in a lounge chair and as he awoke, he stretched out both arms. Half

asleep, he thought he was still on the lightening and felt around to identify a soft, round object in his right hand. The object was the most notable physical characteristic of an amply endowed, and very indignant German Frauline. She thrashed Brad soundly about the head and shoulder with her umbrella. Amid the Tutonic swearing I could hear my confused younger brother saying, "What, what, what did I do?" Now was that any way for a woman to respond to such a friendly gesture? But then Brad seems to get the same response, even with Greek ladies at bus stops! You'll have to ask Brad about that one.

JUNE 1970

Late in June of '70 north of the capital city of Corfu, Paul Clapp and I worked at the boat yard of Michaele Bouas. Paul, a kid I met in Munich was from Boston and was a very funny and adventuresome guy with a Boston/Irish brogue. The boat seemed to have aged and we had to do a lot of repair work; we even had to replace a plank and re-canvas the deck. A real old-time craftsman supervised all the work. Michaele Bouas had the small boat yard where he built wooden, traditional boats called Kaikis the old fashioned way.

After two weeks the boat was ready. It was the 4th of July (so much seems to have happen on this day, but that is several other stories) and we were starting another season of adventure. A construction company inadvertently provided fireworks. They were dredging a channel and set off an explosion in the water less than 100yds away. Thanks to them, we christened the boat not with champagne, but with mud and dead fish. Could this be an omen?

We decided to celebrate the launching of the Vayu by attending a mountain festival. We rented a motor scooter to go up to a village in the mountains where the festival was being held. Paul, I found out, was a novice when it came to Ouzo drinking. After a fine festival and one very large bottle of ouzo later, Paul insisted that he drive the scooter down the mountain. Unfortunately, that is exactly what he did! He drove the scooter straight down the mountain, ignoring the switchbacks on the road. We got down very fast; the scooter followed a short time later. Like Brad, we found out that cactus grow on the east coast of Corfu, as well as in Paleo Kastrisa. (Late that night we left the dead scooter at the office; last rites for the scooter were held the following morning. We were unable to attend.)

On the morning of July 5th, with the scooter police hot on our trail, we headed south with a light wind from the N.W. We looked back and talked of the fine time Paul and I had and I told him of Brad's short cut down the mountain as we picked cactus spines out of our legs.

We were making such fine progress in spite of our hangovers that we decided to bypass Porto Gayon and keep sailing through the night. Paul had the midnight to 4am watch. Before the watch was over, I was to discover that Paul was a novice at reading and interpreting charts. I woke up around 1am to find the seas breaking and confused around us, not to mention myself. I could see through the dark that we had just passed a large above water rock by less than 20 feet. It seems that Paul took a shortcut through some "fly specs" on the chart,

those black dots represented an extensive shoal with many rocks awash!. (he didn't even have the spaghetti sauce excuse) After much tacking and dodging in the dark, in desperation we tied up to a huge light buoy marking the shoals, to sit out the rest of the night. We had sailed 55nm, which almost ended up being the total of all our sailing that summer.

The next morning we sailed the rest of the way to the port of Lefkas, where there was quite a surprise waiting for me. After literally losing contact with my family for 6 months (due to a stupid argument between Dad and me) we sailed into port only to see the family's boat, the Caribbee, docked at the quay. What a face saving way to reconcile and forgive! Mom said that as Dad was getting ready to catch a cab to the airport he stopped and pointing to a small white speck on the horizon, he told her that it was my boat and he canceled the cab to wait for me. Mom thought he was crazy. The hatchets were promptly buried and almost all was forgiven. That evening we watched a serene and peaceful sunset over Lefkas, once more a family.

The next morning, July 7th, we awoke to find that a road crew had sprayed tar on the roadway along the quay giving our already distressed new paint job a very stylish tweed look as strands of tar drifted in the wind to land on our blue deck. We spent that day walking around the town of Lefkas desiring to meet some beautiful native girls and trying to get the Seagull motor to work. We finally gave up on both and left the motor on the Caribbee and our desires under a cold shower.

The wind blew from the north again at about 10 knots so we left the morning of the 8th and sailed wing and wing south through the canal that separates Lefkas and the mainland. The Romans originally dug the canal and periodically it would silt up and had to be re-dug, finally silting up entirely in the sixth century. The Venetians opened it again and built a set of forts at the northern end and a single large fort at the southern entrance. Our destination was Meganisis and our course took us past the island of Skorpio where Jackie Onassis was in residence. We hoped that she might invite us in for a cup of tea, but she must have overlooked us somehow. Someone did notice us, a speedboat did come out when we sailed too close and in no uncertain terms we were told to stand off.

Paul Clapp was one of the most interesting guys I'd met. He had a great sense of humor, spoke with that weird accent, would give you his last cent if you asked, and except in the mornings, he had a very agreeable nature. I met him while I was going to school in Munich and he arranged a job for me as a furniture mover and day laborer. Since I lived in a dorm and housing was very expensive and difficult to find, I let him stay in my dorm room on the top shelf of the closet. (it was against the rules to have any non-resident in the dorm). To get off the shelf Paul had to crawl out headfirst down the wall. I forgot to tell my roommate about our "guest" and one morning as Paul slithered off the shelf making Komodo Dragon sounds flicking his tongue in and out; my roommate woke up, did a triple take, and swore off drinking for a month (well maybe a couple of days).

We finally arrived at the very small and quite village of Porto Vathy a sail of only 12nm. There were supposed to be some Neolithic excavations on the

island we hoped to check out, but we got side tracked by the tavernas. We never did see the excavations, perhaps next time.

At dusk all was still and calm, the setting sun on the darkening landscape created a feeling of deep peace and tranquility. My desire to experience these intense feelings was my motive for these voyages of the Vayu. The experience was the reward. Greece is so much more than islands, mountains, people and history. It is the sum of all that creates an intensity of feeling and sensations rarely experienced....a sensation of permanence over a vast time scale and simultaneously the feeling of insignificance of an individual's time frame. The primitive altars and artifacts of Neolithic man, the magnificent Greek architecture, the Roman towns and cities, the Medieval castles and shrines of Christianity lay together, one upon the other, silent, and often broken, but never dead.

The next morning with a 27-mile sail ahead of us, we left with a light wind from the west, but before we cleared the southern tip of Meganisis, it dropped to nothing. We ended up rowing 14 miles before the wind picked up in the late afternoon as we approached our destination of Ithica. No wonder it took Odysseus so long to return to this island, he probably had to row

We spent two days recuperating. The first from rowing, the second from the first. By now Paul had improved his sailing, navigating and most important Ouzoing. We also met a delightful Greek gal named Adriana, who showed us all about the island and made its history come alive with her enthusiasm.

We set sail for the Dragonera islands (cool sounding name) to the east on the 11th of July. As usual, by mid morning the wind died and we had to row and row and row. After exhausting all other subjects of conversation, we seemed to get into a rut on how hot it was. I think we came up with several score ways of observing how hot it was and the effects of the heat on various parts of our anatomy. At this point, Paul began to get a wild look in his eyes. In the middle of the crossing, miles from shore and not a ship in sight, he proclaims to no one in particular "I will strangle the next person who says something about how hot it is." According to Paul, I lost most of my tan and got 19' away from him on our 18' boat.

We continued rowing under a bright and almost cloudless sky. The only shade seemed to be our own shadows. In the distance, however, rising over the steep mountains of the mainland, were brilliant white billowing cumulous clouds casting their shade on uncaring rocks.

We finally ended up on the mainland without loss of life, limb or mind after a tedious 23-mile row. We anchored north of the mouth of the Aspro (white) river in a shallow, sandy bay just east of the island of Petala. Shortly after dinner, we noticed a small fire on the beach which spread rapidly along the reed covered shore lighting up the evening sky until late into the night.

That night we were solicited rather relentlessly for blood donations. Greek vampires? No, worse! Greek mosquitoes. I think the word "voracious" comes from the Greek phrase "great big-assed Aspro River mosquitoes". Fortunately for me they seemed to prefer Boston blood. Perhaps it was because I pulled Paul's poncho off during the night, better him than me! I felt a sacrifice was needed and I knew Paul would have volunteered had he been awake. Paul swears that he heard two mosquitoes trying to decide if they should pick us up

and carry us away to the swamp or suck us dry right on the boat. They decided that if they went to the swamp with us, the big mosquitoes would take us away from them.

The next morning I awoke a bit bleary eyed, but I was concerned for Paul since he had a complexion that looked like anemic tapioca. While Paul scratched himself, I waded ashore. Looking south back towards the boat, I saw the Vayu perfectly mirrored in the calm water with the distant island of Oxia in the background.

After breakfast, the wind picked up from the N.W. and we headed south to pass by the uninhabited island of Oxia. Rocky and forbidding, it marked a turning point. From here on we would head east for the next 150 miles to our final destination, the port of Pireus.

We sailed through a channel between Oxia and what appeared to be small islets. These islets, located at Scropha point are about a mile east of Oxia. They are actually joined together by a low sand spit to the mainland. The wind shifted to the north and east and picked up in late morning as we attempted to round Scropha point. We turned back with the idea of waiting on the beach until the wind moderated. We built a lean-to and had a four-hour siesta in the shade until the wind lessened and we again tried rounding Scropha point.

We stayed as close as possible to the northern shore of the Gulf of Patras to take advantage of the lee of the low, sandy, reed-covered islands and dunes. By late afternoon, we anchored in the slight lee of Tholi island. We had sailed only 19 miles but considering the nap, not too bad. It, like the other islands, gave no real shelter from the wind, but did keep the seas from building across the lagoon to the north. We spent a rather uncomfortable night there. To make matters worse, we found that through an oversight all we had to eat was a jar of cold pickled pigs feet and no sterno to heat them. For a beverage, we had several selections, the same that we had from the beginning of the trip: canned Hawaiian punch, powdered Hawaiian punch and Hawaiian punch concentrate. I was sure Paul was going to give me a Hawaiian punch.

The next day, July 13, we approached Patras from the northwest. Towering above the town were the mountains of the Peloponnis. They are over 6,000 feet high and towering above them was a single white cumulous cloud on their tops looking almost like a volcanic plume. We anchored in Patras harbor after a 24 mile sail. First things first, we located a public bath and had a real *hot shower*. Then we had something cold to drink(*not* Hawaiian punch), and a nice hot meal (not pigs feet). In Greece they have outdoor movies, rather like a drive-in, but actually a sit-in instead. We saw a western, "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly" in Italian with Greek subtitles. It was a bit hard to tell the good from the bad, but the uglies weren't so hard.

After a fine evening we left bright and early on the 14th and headed through the narrows between Rion and Andirion. Each point was guarded by a Turkish castle and together the domination of the Gulf of Corinth was assured by those who controlled these castles. On we sailed toward our destination of Navpaktos 10nm away. The castles and fortifications of Navpaktos were in front of us to the northeast and to the south, rose the mountains of the Peloponnesus, one atop the next until they climbed up into the clouds. We stopped at

Navpactos for lunch at a taverna overlooking the tiny harbor that was enclosed by the high stonewalls of a Venetian castle with two towers at the entrance.

After a leisurely lunch we left that afternoon and headed around Mornos point and then east into the Gulf of Corinth. The wind was from the southwest at about 15 or 20 knots and we were surfing along wing and wing. We were making such good time that we decided to sail through the night. (When will we learn?) I made sure Paul knew the difference between rocks on the chart and fly shit and I removed all stray spaghetti sauce and gravy stains from the chart. The first night watch was mine. It was uneventful, except for the thousands of stars and the brilliant moon light that made the water sparkle and gave the illusion that we were rushing along at a fantastic speed. . Actually there was one incident that I have to describe. With the wind freshening I doused the jib and tied it down with a bungee cord. A short while later I found myself staring at the bundled sail on the bow. It was gone! In its place was a little mermaid with skin of alabaster white in the moonlight. I knew I could not be seeing what I was seeing, it had to be a trick of the light. I shifted my position and even called out. Since it was almost Paul's watch I woke him and simply told him to take a look at the bow. "My God! There's a mermaid on the bow!" At least I wasn't crazy, we both were! The moon went behind a cloud and the mermaid vanished to be replaced by a bungeed jib sail.

Paul took over around midnight and was reluctant to wake me; meanwhile, the seas kept getting larger and the wind stronger. Around 3AM I woke up and saw a wave that was easily 8 feet high cresting right above Paul. Paul had a rather casual expression on his face until I sat bolt upright and pulled the CO₂ cartridge on my inflatable life vest. The wave broke in a mass of foam as the stern lifted up at the last moment. I took the tiller while Paul scrambled around for a life jacket. The Vayu was totally unresponsive to the tiller. When I checked, I found that everything below the water line on the rudder was gone. That wonderful boat had been sailing on a run with essentially no rudder! Do not try this at home kids; we are professionals!

About then the wind decided to shift more and more to the south, so that we were being forced onto a rocky lee shore with the seas crashing into the vase of high cliffs. To complicate matters, the sail jibbed so violently that the boom was pulled vertically and fouled in the spreaders as we were lashing an oar to the stern as an emergency rudder. We dropped all sail and finished rigging the oar and raised the mermaid, I mean Jib. Under jib only, the boat could not point into the wind at all and we were rapidly closing on a very high rocky point. If we could somehow clear it, we could find shelter in a bay behind the point. We cleared Pangalos point in the moonlight by less than 50 feet. The waves breaking on the base of the black cliff sounded their frustration as we slipped by.

Once around the point, we sailed in rapidly shifting winds into Andikiron Bay. The wind then dropped off to almost nothing and we could see the lights of Andikira village on the shore. After sailing 46nm we were both so physically and emotionally exhausted that we dozed off and the boat gently drifted into the side of a vertical cliff. There was no damage only a bump, but it did create enough adrenalin to row the boat the last mile or so where we tied up to a quay just as dawn was breaking.

We woke up around noon, had a huge meal to celebrate our good fortune, followed by a siesta, a late afternoon meal, a nap and finally a complete dinner late that evening. It is strange how much you appreciate food after a close call with death.

After having the rudder repaired we left around noon. In the daylight, the bay looked so small and insignificant, but the night before, it was the most beautiful bay in the world. Not far into our sail we landed on a tiny island, about 6 miles from our starting point, and anchored next to some steps carved out of rock. What caught our attention was that on the tiny island there were several groups of ruins. After climbing up, we found that there was the foundation of a Roman villa built up on a series of arches. Beneath these arches was a huge cistern about 20 feet below. In the center of the "roof" was an opening to draw water from the cistern. Digging through the rubble directly beneath this opening we found a lot of broken pottery and marble and two small Roman bronze rings. I wonder what other treasures are still in that cistern. In the waters just off the island at the bottom of the ruins, was a torso of a toga clad statue, badly broken but still beautiful.

Looking down on the boat from the villa at the rudder that we had drawn up and put on the aft deck we realized how much was lost from the rudder. The pine wood repair stood out as a reminder of how fragile our Vayu really was.

We left in late afternoon and sailed and drifted through the night. (do we ever learn). Out of the light fog/haze came a procession of small coastal freighters that we did our best to dodge or row away from. I doubt that they ever saw us. We finally arrived at the western end of the Corinth canal in the early morning sunlight after a slow 26 nm sail.

While waiting for a friendly yacht to tow us through the canal, (a motor is required for passage) we were approached by a friendly fisherman who wanted to buy some American cigarettes. Being low on funds, we quickly agreed. Unfortunately, our black marketeering careers ended with the fisherman's brother-in-law, who was a customs man, "busting" us. You don't suppose that we were set up do you? After destroying two cartons of cigarettes (less the 4 packs for expenses that he put in his pocket) he let us off with a stern warning.

For such a bad beginning the day developed very nicely since we met a French yacht headed to Pireus. I recognized the boat, having seen it on the Italian island of Gilio. We talked and he remembered the boat I was on. He offered to tow us through the canal. But, he explained, his motor would only work for 10 minutes at a time before overheating, just enough time to get us past the canal captain's sight. We counted on the westerly wind that had sprung up to help us through. Indeed we proceeded through the canal, and just after passing the last manned checkpoint, the engine was shut off and he raised his spinnaker to sail the rest of the way through the canal with us in tow.

What a glorious sight to be sailing through the Corinth canal with its steep walls rising over a hundred feet on each side. This canal was finished in 1893, but it was being planned and attempts were made to build it for the previous 2,600 years. Alexander the Great had the idea explored, but concluded that what he thought was a difference in the heights of the two seas would flood the cities. (there were no differences). Julius Caesar and even Caligula toyed (or in

the case of Caligula fondled) with the idea. Nero actually had construction begun and probably could have completed the canal, but for some health problems (his political enemies killed him). A cut stone road was finally built and ships were dragged across the four mile wide isthmus until the thirteenth century. Here we were sailing through this canal, something the ancients dreamed of doing and were never able to accomplish. Sure beats dragging the Vayu down the road.

With some excitement we cleared the eastern end of the canal, and cast off from the French boat and sailed through the afternoon until we made out last landfall before the end of the trip, the island of Salamis 26 miles from the western end of the canal. We anchored in a small cove about a mile west of the southern tip of the island. I had intended to beach the boat on what looked like a sandy beach, but when I pitched out a bow anchor onto the beach there was a loud clang instead of the soft thud I expected. Paul snubbed the stern anchor just in time. It seems the beach was actually sandstone with wave marks and ripples preserved from when it was a real beach along a very different sea millions of years ago.

On this last night as we lay on the "beach" next to a fire we talked a lot and reflected back on all the things that had happened, and almost happened. I did a lot of thinking about what this kind of experience meant and how it would influence my outlook on life in the future. I decided that I would share this again with experience with someone special, my younger brother Brad. He would only be 12 or so but in spite of him being a little shit sometimes, he was really an important part of my life.

The following morning, we sailed up the coast of Salamis and crossed the strait where the fleet of the Persian king Xeres was destroyed by a much smaller number of Greek ships in 490 B.C. Had the outcome been different, our whole world would have been greatly altered. Greece and Rome developed free from domination by an eastern despotic power. We arrived at the yacht harbor of Marina Zea in the early afternoon, secured the boat and caught the bus to the family's apartment just outside of Athens. Our incredible journey was at an end, for now.

Paul had to return to Germany shortly afterwards, and I made arrangements to have the boat brought inland and stored near the family's home for the winter.

As I sit here writing this in my dorm in Munich with the cold wet Bavarian weather outside, I think of the golden sunshine and the warm blue waters and I know I will return. I know that the chill winter winds that blow down from the high mountains of Greece don't bother the Vayu either; because a boat can have memories too.