

NOV/DEC 2014

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GIDDY UP

Gallop away to region's hottest riding spots

BLUEWATER CRUISING

Part II of signature cruise to Andaman

17TH WESTERN CIRCUIT SAILING REGATTA

Plus 20th Anniversary celebrations

Makassar Buggis Joins



Mir's Gallery

Mir

A beautiful partnership between the highly skilled Makassar Buggis carpenters and sailing yacht *Mir* breathes new life into Biosphere's conservation programme in Bali. **By Abigail Alling**



Mir in the Java Sea



Makassar Buggis tools

Library bunks



Mail, Mark and Amir

and USA) returning home to Raffles Marina after rebuilding *Mir's* interior.

Mir had been moored in NW Bali allowing us to volunteer with our "Friends of Menjangan" conservation programmes. Meanwhile we engaged Makassar carpenters to work their magic in creating hatches, cabinets, bunks, shelves and floors. They were descendants of the ancient Buggis sea people who had been building boats for centuries and sailed the Southeast Asian seas.

These men had been trained in the skillful art of carpentry using chisels, saws and hammers, which they had lovingly brought to the ship with them. Combined with our modern day electric skill saws and battery operated screw guns, the task was speeded up. Three months later, they had moulded the teak leftover from *Mir's* old deck as well as some reclaimed from a Javanese bakery, into beautiful functional designs.

How lucky we were to have been introduced to Mail and Amir who had abilities to work with wood that were

"Oh what a night!" we exclaimed to each other watching the moon rise over Mount Agung while sailing *Mir* along the northern coast of Bali. We were a crew of nine (representing the nationalities of Indonesia, Spain, Argentina, Chile, France, UK, Belgium

miraculous. Something seemed to be at play other than their gift of carpentry; it was as if all the wealth of knowledge held by their ancestors continued to pour into them with a knowingness that was beyond their lifetime. We were working with the lineage of carpenters who built the great ships that first explored the Asian seas, and together we were remodeling *Mir* into a blend of eastern and western styles, and aesthetics representing our wish to live and work as a planetary people.

We watched as our crew relaxed into the sail with contentment and joy, living comfortably at sea. We looked back on the memories of the last few months as we retraced ancient sea routes of the Buggis. We reflected on how different the Java Sea and South China Sea were now in terms of biodiversity and health, even though we were moving through the similar expanse of sea, currents and winds.

It has been our hope that *Mir* will inspire people, regardless of culture, to enjoy sailing the seas and experience first hand both its beauty and its demise. We contemplate our present day situation while being entertained by glorious sunsets that are contrasted with evidence of little life as day after day, we watch our fishing lines towed behind *Mir*, unable to catch a single fish.

We discuss around the helm, what it would take to restore the health of fisheries and our ocean in general; and engage each other in conversations about the role of humanity in stewarding our biosphere. In the short span of the ten-day voyage, the experience of sailing *Mir* was working its magic. We emerged as a united crew, looking with new eyes as we sail the ocean; knowing that we all hold responsibility for the future of our biosphere and it is ours to care for and love.

Please join us online at www.biospherefoundation.org and at mir-makeitreal.blogspot.com