

Finally: a Cruise Cruise

So when the Cruise girl met up with the cruise agent it seemed only natural to Ann (Burgess and no relation) to send her packing off to sunny climes with hubby in tow across the bounding waves. Luckily for our damp duo the Big Red Boat had just got its stabilizers tightened so, gladrags packed, they dove into a daiquiri and were Bahama bound with a recurring theme and cries of "Where's mine and why isn't it bigger?"

"Keelhaul the fun director! He was the worst thing about the whole deal" said Theo "I don't want to be told that my applause didn't register on his enthusiasm meter. The band was damn good, though, and the service was impeccable. Altogether yar, I'd say."

The first stop was the island of Nassau and its famous straw market. Unfortunately, the forces of the free market were viciously in effect here and every stall had exactly the same

baskets, calendars, nic-nac holders and t-shirts that every other stall had. "I'm afraid I'm no good at bartering" Sallie wimpered after buying her basket for \$1 dollar more than originally offered and bagging a lighter for \$2.75. However she managed to skirt the \$40.00 beach excursion and found the free public beach almost deserted, clean and all that the brochures brag about. Crystal blue waters



Sallie and her big red boat in Nassau.

and soft white sand "stunning"

St. Lucaya was the next port, Theo snorkeled and sampled the local beer which got the thumbs up. "It was lovely to do nothing but drink, swim, eat and relax" was the final verdict.

Yet another LA trip: Workin' on the Rail Road

The month of November saw Theo and a lot of his colleagues out on Mt. Wilson at the telescope site and hobnobbing with their JPL (Jet Propulsion Labs at NASA) pals. Halfway through the month Theo took some time off, was joined by Sallie and the Great Living Area hunt took place. Our migrating birds looked closely at nest sites all around the foot of the mountain: La Canada/Flintridge (too much moola wanted) Glendale (too little urbanity therein) and Pasadena and Altadena (just right!)

In the heart of Pasadena lies the campus of CalTech and JPL lies just to the west so, as luck would have it, the nesting site will be home to a colony of a gaggle of our ozzie friends. Michael and Peter and Laurence and Chloe and Andrew and Michelle and Nils will soar on high from S&T's near and far past and come to Pasadena to roost. "That's the story and we're sticking to it." they said.



Preparing to meet the captain

VISA DO-SI-DO

A new and interesting path has been found towards the elusive greencard (which we all know by now is actually pink). The legal alien and his trailing spouse are now trying to establish that he is an 'outstanding researcher recognized in the international community' (INS terminology). "Basically, it's a way to avoid a lot of the really slow paperwork" said the somewhat boastful scientist, "and it means pulling a few favors. Favors I'm not sure I deserve." After being buried in peatmoss for the required three months the couple hope the I140 works so that they can be residents of the USA before their next trip home.

Late Breaking News:

- * Space flight center at Cape Canaveral deemed best nerd fun this year with full size Saturn V's and real alligators.
- * Best old time rockin' found at the 'House of Blues' where Deep Purple proved they could still play.
- * Worst movie of the season "My Best Friend's a Jerk" with Julia Bee Stung Lips Roberts.
- * Best movie of the season "The Full Monty", even though you don't get the full monty.
- * Intrepid D&D team find themselves in the 24th century and flying a space ship. They miss their lovely monk and their researcher.
- * Theo buy's himself an electric guitar for Sallie's birthday and gets away with it.

Road to Ruin Launch First CD

1997 was a redletter year for The Road to Ruin String Band. Using his home PC and CakeWalk, some pretty fabby recording software, and the talent of shareware writers on the net, Theo recorded the band. He and Sallie then bought themselves a CD writer and now there is a CD which is self titled and self everything elsed. Bill Banjo designed the cover, Sallie recorded all the copies, they even designed the CD labels on the publishing software this newsletter is produced with.

This month the band polished up a few carols and played for their very own Christmas party held at the First Existential Church. The band had played there before at a fund-raiser and liked the friendly atmosphere and the killer acoustics, so armed with a ham and a wassailing bowl, The Road to Ruin did a mix of their old faves (from their first CD) and new tunes like Brightest and Best, The Wexford Carol and Theo's favorite "Mary, Sheep or Jesus". Sallie dutifully wrote out parts for all but they don't know why she did this as none of the buggers can read music.

The Australian carol "Orana" and the Irish jig "The Wren" had John and Sallie tripping over their tongues and Theo struggled with the flu so couldn't do his biting Lehrer satire "A Christmas Carol". Nils "Fringes" Turner, because of his impending thesis, had no time to rehearse so played

cold on songs he had never heard before. The bodhran and egg were played live for the first time and Fiddler Doug soloed on the Wooden Man Dancing on a Stick.

A man and his digital drum kit.

