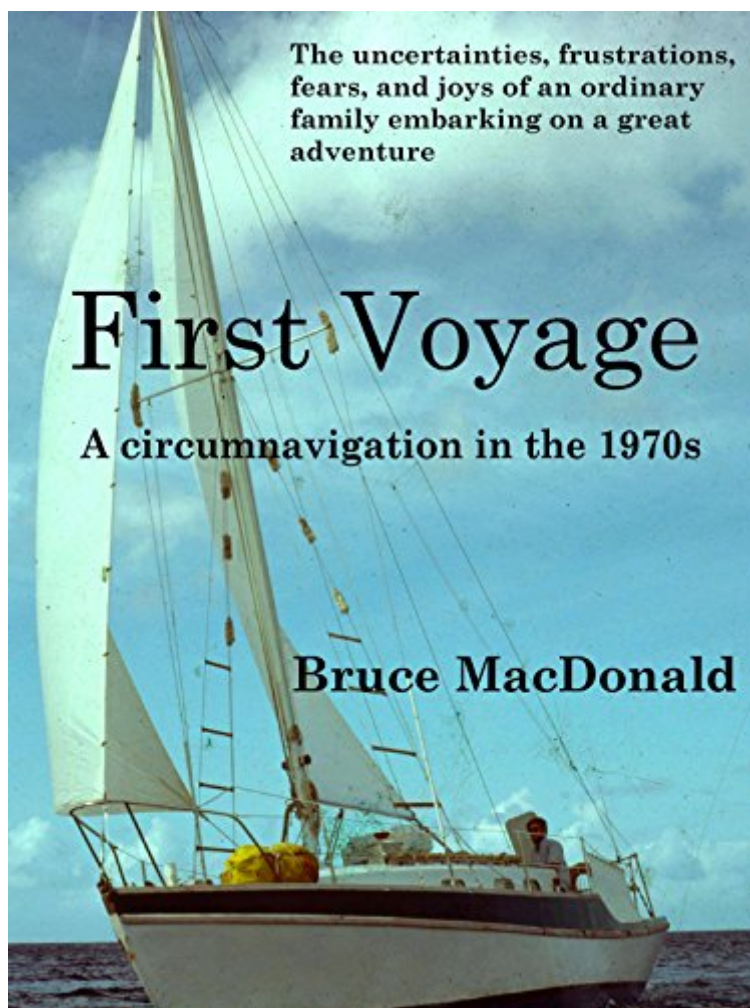


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First Voyage: A Circumnavigation In The 1970s



Synopsis

Forty years ago, Bruce and Liz MacDonald along with their young son, Jeff, set off in a 31-foot boat on what would become a three-year circumnavigation of the world. The idea for the voyage was born in 1971 when they had no jobs, very little money, and had never even sailed. Against all reason, they laid out a five-year plan that would, they hoped, put them in a position to make their dream a reality. Incredibly, it all worked out almost exactly as they'd scripted it. It wasn't simple though. Circumstances allowed them only a few months to find a boat and prepare it for the voyage, and although the boat they found was essentially seaworthy, much of the gear that came with it was not. A harrowing first offshore passage nearly scuttled the whole enterprise. No mere travelogue or sanitized logbook, the book—mostly written during the voyage—chronicles their frustrations and uncertainties as they deal with the inevitable problems involved in preparing the boat; it also gives a surprisingly candid and realistic look at what it's like at sea in a small boat with a small crew, as they confront their fears and doubts and struggle to adapt to life in an incredibly demanding environment. For them, the experience is as much a mental trip as a physical journey, an aspect of voyaging that's seldom explored in any depth in published accounts. The personal struggle is central, but MacDonald also offers insightful—and sometimes humorous—glimpses into the cultures and societies they visit, many of which at that time were teetering on the edge of the modern world. From an impromptu evening of Polynesian dancing in the Marquesas, to drinking yangona with the firewalkers in Fiji, to speaking Pidgin with villagers in the New Hebrides, to the hectic confusion of Indonesia in places like Kupang and Bali, to South Africa before the end of apartheid, it offers glimpses of a passing world. Follow along as they gradually pull the boat and themselves together and bring the voyage to a successful conclusion. It was 40 years ago, but it's still a heck of an adventure.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

An amazing story... almost impossible to put down this book once you start reading ! It is a raw and honest account of the emotions, struggles and successes of fulfilling a dream... and a monumental dream at that. Bruce, Liz and Jeff share an AMAZING adventure... full of highs and lows that are difficult to comprehend (except by other circumnavigators I'm sure). Reading about their adventure is a true eye opener, an amazing glimpse into a life adventure that few actually ever attempt... let alone accomplish. The story is also extremely well written and flows perfectly from beginning to end. The fact that the story takes place in the 70's when gps and sat-phones were non-existent makes their adventure substantially more challenging... but most of the story and insights that they provide are completely contemporary. I HIGHLY RECOMMEND.

I thoroughly enjoyed the book. Even though the circumnavigation was over 40 years ago, it was very interesting to read a personal account of the trip. I was sailing only in protected waters at that time but I remember what it was like without all the gadgets sailors use now. Thanks for publishing it so I could enjoy. I am passing it along to my brother and his wife who still sail as well.

I enjoyed the focus on the internal, emotional aspects of voyaging, and the issues related to voyaging with a family.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. While I am a sailor (but not a voyager) I think non-sailors would like it equally well. The author not only lets the reader experience the joys and hardships of sailing around the world, but also exposes his own humanity in a frank, but interesting way. I am sure I will read it again!

As sailors, we enjoyed reading an honest representation of sailing adventures. We found it informative, humorous, and entertaining. Bruce and Elizabeth are great writers.

Not many people today would choose to do it the way the MacDonalds' did, but anyone with thoughts of an extended voyage or any kind of offshore sailing could benefit from reading this book, and armchair sailors should enjoy it too. Too often the dream doesn't quite match the reality, as the MacDonalds found out, and yet they still found it worth doing. Well-written, intelligent, observant, funny in places, but also very honest. Plenty of interest and insight into the psychological aspects of coping with life at sea. One of the best accounts I've read of what it's like out there.

This book was a fabulous read. Enjoyed the truth in sailing. The journey physically and mentally. Well written. Read cover to cover. Captivating.

If you are a sailor, you will enjoy reading this book. It gives the good and the bad about voyaging. I really enjoyed it.

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