



**NOAA Teachers at Sea  
Vince Rosato and Kimberly Pratt  
Onboard NOAA Ship RONALD H. BROWN  
March 9 - 28, 2006**

**Day 1**

Date: March 9, 2006  
Location: Barbados, West Indies – In port

We sail today. After spending the entire day traveling from San Francisco to Barbados by way of Miami, we arrived in Bridgetown. We heard screeching critters at the Grand Barbados Hotel. We learned that they were tiny frogs that sounded like squawking tropical birds.

We took a taxi to the port, about 20 minutes on the other side of the island, after meeting Chief Scientist, Dr. Molly Baringer, also called “Dr. Molly.”



Docked among cruise liners (which are huge hotel-like pleasure ships), we were greeted aboard the NOAA ship, RONALD H. BROWN, by Ensign Jackie Almeida, serving as OOD, Officer of the Deck. The OOD is the captain's delegate like when the principal has to go to a meeting the AP (assistant principal) is in charge. Everyone welcomed us and made us feel right at home. After stowing our gear and being directed to where the cabin linens (bed sheets, pillows and towels) and galley (where we eat meals) were, we made our way to Bridgetown and back by foot. One of the main sources of income for Barbados is selling things to travelers, otherwise called tourism. They made money by our visit. It cost \$1.40 Barbados for postcard postage. We passed a fish processing area not far outside of the closed port facilities where Mahi Mahi, otherwise known as “Caribbean Dolphin” by the locals was being prepared for market. They are not real dolphins, since they are fish, and not marine mammals.

The harbor pilot and his assistant boarded the ship yesterday when our ship was moved. We were invited to view the ship maneuverings from the bridge, where the officers navigate and drive the ship in the front, or bow, of the ship. Junior Officer Ensign James Brinkley invited us to the bridge at the request of the Captain Gary Petrae. If you thought parallel parking looked difficult by car, the captain explained a ship doesn't have any brakes, which makes it harder. He made it look easy. We will continue to take photos and interview officers, crew, and scientists and help out where we can. We will be

sending logs periodically to keep you informed of our journey and help make the science we are learning more accessible in school and home.

Everyone enjoys seeing critters like monkeys and dolphins, but this expedition is primarily about chemistry, currents and climate, non-living, or abiotic, features of the seas. Coming up soon are fire and abandon ship drills. Fire and emergency drills are held weekly at sea because shipboard personnel must rely solely on themselves in the event of an emergency. In some cases help may be days away, so ships at sea will render assistance to other vessels located in proximity. Later we will be conducting a test run of the CTD. The CTD is a conductivity, temperature and density reading at various depths from instruments on a line that extends from the surface of the sea to the ocean floor. Stay tuned for more data.

**Assignment** – Maritime flags are a very important way for ships to communicate to each other. For example, when a ship wants a harbor pilot to help it navigate its way through the harbor, they'll hoist (put up) a blue and gold pilot flag. We all use flags in our daily lives—the American Flag, California Flag, and we use flags to start races. Describe one flag that you know of. Describe its markings and state the purpose for the flag or what it means.

### **Vince Rosato—Personal Log**

At the airport after getting up around 3:30 a.m. Kim and I were in line and an agent asked me to get into a "special" line. No, it was not the express line. As others walked by, one said, "Are you in the penalty box?" I said, "I was chosen--perhaps I should buy a lottery ticket." Anyway, I was run through a glass container and puffed with air jets which sensed nothing but my cologne and was passed along to our delayed flight and Kim's enjoyment. On the journey here the wife of a former Minister of Trinidad watched out for us. That was memorable because she attempted to get us quick passage to our connection at Miami after our arrival terminal was switched due to our delayed flight.

### **Kimberly Pratt—Personal Log**

Hi all! It's great to be in Barbados! The students and I really worked hard to get ready for the trip. In class they decorated their Styrofoam cups (for a later experiment), signed the stickers for the drifter buoy we'll be deploying later and most importantly, they all made me going away cards! I was really touched (they love to see me cry).

It's beautiful here. The weather has been warm and tropical. The flight was long, and I met a wonderful lady named Nora. The next day I went to the ship and checked in.

Today, we sailed and we'll be motoring straight away for two days. I haven't felt really sick, so that's good news. It's nice to be traveling with another teacher this time around. My e-mail on board the ship is [kim.pratt@rbnems.ronbrown.oma.noaa.gov](mailto:kim.pratt@rbnems.ronbrown.oma.noaa.gov)

Keep in touch.