

Capt. Daley's Sea Stories

MV ART CARLSON

Baker Build Out

01 November 2011



During October and November, Baker Hughes assembled a frac plant on the main deck of the MV Art Carlson in Luba, Equatorial Guinea. An oil or gas well is frac'd by pumping tons of small ceramic balls (proppant) under high pressure to open up the reservoir for better drainage and higher flow rates. The proppant keeps the fracture "propped" open.

Luba is a small town located on the South West side of Bioko, the main island of Equatorial Guinea. It is lush and green due to the amount of rain which falls here. The port is called Luba Freeport, which is a bit of a misnomer as the customs rules are amongst some of the toughest in Africa.



A visitor while we were at the anchorage. It's very distinct coloring should make it easy to look up when I return.



George, our grocery provider is quite a remarkable fellow. He is Philippine and has lived on Luba over ten years. His business partner is the brother of the president, which must help his ability to find the most difficult things to find. This is a drink made in Russia that tastes just like bread. It is like drinking a slice of bread!



These are soft gingerbread on the inside with a hard thin sweet caramelized icing on the outside. The powdered sugar helps them not stick together. They are not only really flavorful, and are addictive.



The island can really be called tropical, though I would not call it a tropical paradise.



The main part of the town comes right down to Luba Bay.



Andriy, my Chief Mate, is a big help with running the boat when I am off duty (but still on call). Andriy is from the Ukraine.



I am controlling the stern Z-drives. As there is no rudder, the vessel is turned by rotating the prop to the direction you want to steer by rotating these black knobs. The metal piece with the black handle controls the speed of the propeller.



Our drills are very animated as you can see.



One of our AB's is being suited up to fight a fire for one of our drills.



He simulates fighting the fire complete with SCBA bottle on his back.



Everyone has their turn at explaining how the life raft is launched and operated.



The participants of our weekly drill, including personnel from Baker Hughes, pose for a photo.



The malaria carrying mosquito is what we fear the most.



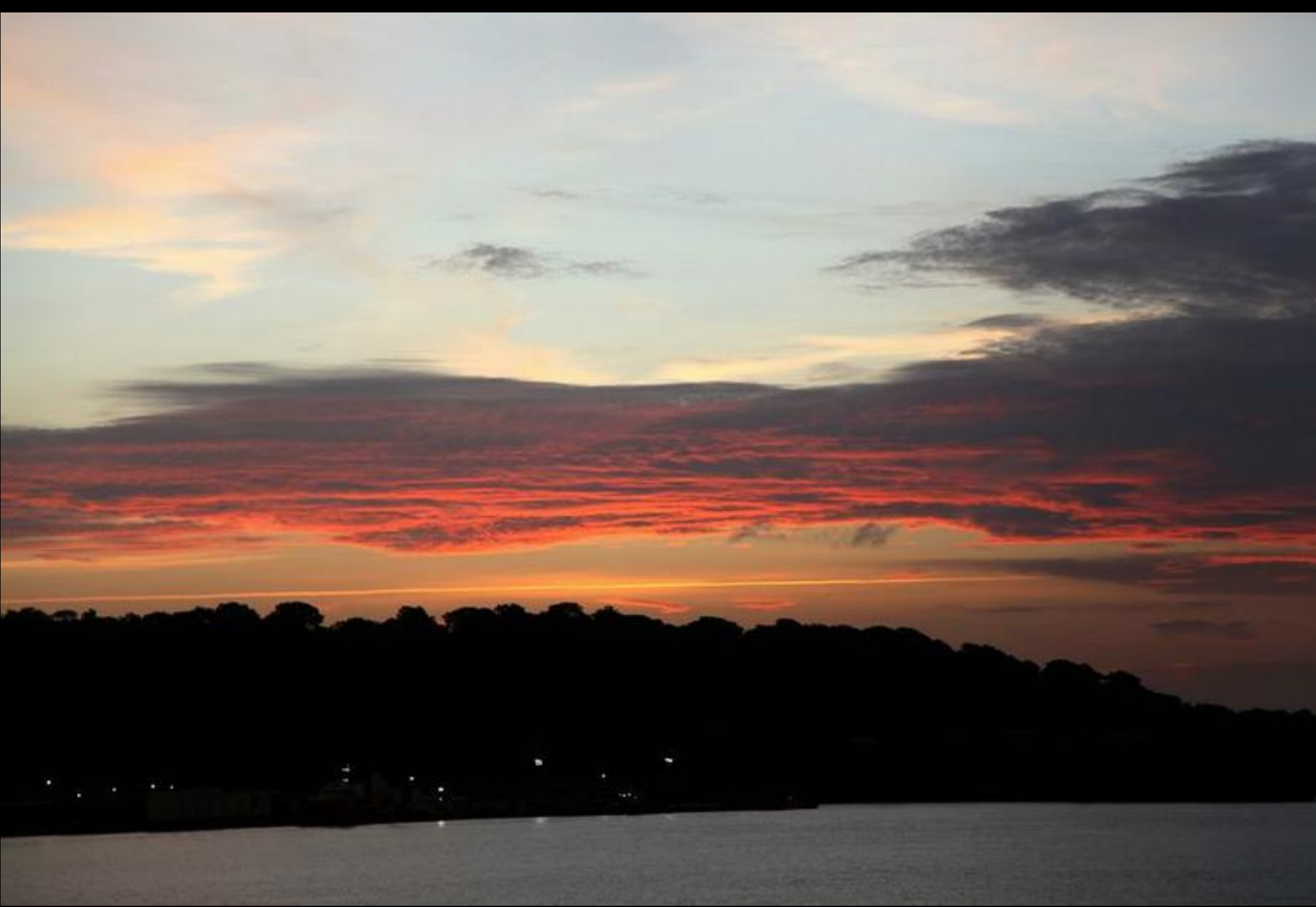
A vessel is testing its FiFi system with the mountain as a backdrop.



Cargo ship arriving in the anchorage awaits its turn for the dock in Luba.



The cargo ship is headed into the dock.



Yet another African sunset



Equatorial Guinea has quite a number of navy vessels which make the waters safer from piracy. However, these vessels are mostly manned by Ukrainians. Go figure!



A look at Luba Freeport from the bridge of the Art Carlson - Hess, an oil company, occupies many of the green buildings.



Shot from my stateroom at dawn, the moon is ready to set over the western horizon.



