

Capt. Daley's Sea Stories

M/V Ken C Tamblyn Ghana, Africa

17 September 2010



We departed Luba, Equatorial Guinea undertaking a three day voyage to Ghana. Although we skirted the southern border of Nigeria, the voyage was without incident. We cleared into Ghana in the port of Takoradi. We proceeded to Sekondi for our berthing. Sekondi is half naval base, half oilfield base, so I believe we will be relatively safe here.

(c) Capt. Gregory C. Daley, 2010
info@captaingreg.net
<http://www.captaingreg.net>

These photos have been resized up from their original images. The original images are 3456 pixels by 2592 pixels with higher resolution. If you would like a copy for your personal use, please email me and I will email the original image to you at no charge. If you wish to purchase an image for commercial use, the charge is \$100 US per image. Contact me at info@CaptainGreg.net



Fishing at night is always good. Our six huge sodium vapor lights provide just the right lighting to attract bugs which attracts small fish which attracts big fish which make the native fishermen happy.



One day the entire dock in Luba was cleared and we were all sent to the anchorage. A few moments later fighter jets came in low and fast. We thought there might be some kind of coup going on. We still don't know what it was all about, but this guy was low and barely sub-sonic. Can you see him above and to the left of the ship?



There he is. It's hard to catch something moving that fast!



Being the manager of the dock has his perks. A lift with this equipment would cost us several hundred dollars. There's a 100 HP Johnson on the back, somewhat overkill for a pleasure fishing boat.



Off to Ghana. We went far enough south to leave a lot of distance between us and Nigeria and hopefully the Nigerian pirates. The trip was without incident. Takoradi & Sekondi are in far western Ghana and are equidistant between Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire and Accra, Ghana.



There was a nice planet brightly shining under the moon. I never did take the time to figure out which planet, but my guess is Jupiter or Saturn since it was so large and bright.



Entering the port of Takoradi, you pass between two manmade breakwaters. There is a reef just south of the harbor (direction you are looking) which helps break the waves as well. This ship is moored between two buoys, a very interesting arrangement which allows them to "parallel park" 15 large ships in a very small protected space.



This is the main commercial wharf in Takoradi harbor. Their main export is mineral ore, especially bauxite used in the production of aluminum. They also export a lot of cocoa. Ghana used to be called the Gold Coast and was known for its large slave trading business.



Here is one of four commercial warehouses in Takoradi containing ore and other products waiting to be exported.



This is one of the friendliest countries I've seen yet. The greeting from the immigration officials was outstanding. I will leave to the reader's imagination why I had such a surprised look on my face.



The Ghana Immigration officers were very efficient and helpful as well. I wish all immigration officers from all countries were like these people! I believe those in the US are called Customs / Border Patrol and carry sidearms.



As in most coastal towns in Africa, fishing is the main source of income. These guys appeared to have been extremely lucky in their catch. That is quite a load of fish! Not sure how long they stayed out to catch so many or if they just know a good hole to throw their nets into.



Lobsters are abundant in these waters and are bartered very cheaply. We can easily have lobster two to three times a week if we want. They have some good sized lobsters as well!



These fishermen claimed we ran over their net. It's possible, there are nets everywhere. But we were very careful proceeding from Takoradi to Sekondi. We really think they placed a net at our stern to see what they could get from us. Problem is, you are never really sure and you always want to do the right thing.



I believe this is one of the vessels working for Technip, a contractor my Dad worked with as a consultant. These are pipeline hookups used to join two pipelines on the sea floor. A load like this is challenging because it is so top-heavy.



Here we are inside the harbor (naval base) in Sekondi. It's quite a walk from our vessel to the town! Several of our officers and crew have done it, but I've stayed with the vessel. The empty berth, as inviting as it looks, is for Technip and we are allowed alongside only to load and unload. The rest of the time we side tie to the orange boat.



Here is the Navy of Ghana doing PT. Running the pier in the hot sun must build lots of character!



This is one of the locations I look forward to seeing. It is a very old fort. I believe it is called Orange Fort. It is very close to Sekondi harbor.



It's amazing to think about how many tens of thousands of dollars are spent on synthetic high tech racing sails in Los Angeles alone. How much more challenging would it be if you had to make your own sails from sacks and carve your own boat from a tree. That would be a meaningful sailboat race!



Here we are loading provisions (food) at the dock. We not only have our crew of 16 on board but we have the client's people onboard as well to run the frac equipment. There can be as many as 12 of them in addition to our 16 crewmembers. We are certified to bunk 36 people.



Sunset over Sekondi. The orange vessel is the Pacific Aurora. When we are not at the dock we are tied alongside her. Problem is - she is a frac boat and is a competitor of our client. It doesn't make much sense to tie up next to your competitor, but there are no other options or at least not yet.



There are always fishing boats operating just outside the breakwater. We are beginning to believe that it is more like a maritime school than commercial fishing. They seem to do a number of drills. Another custom they have is to stop and pray over their boat and bless it before going offshore. Not a bad idea!