

# Captain Eric Wiberg

Author: Godfrey Albert Kelly



Above: Eric Wiberg. Photos on following page both show Wiberg at different stages of his life adventure.

This one has spots." The time is 27th August 1970. The remarks were from Sten Andersen Wiberg as he observed the latest addition to his family, Eric Tolles Wiberg, at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in New York City. Said observation was later encapsulated in a telegram to Sten's mother, a doctor in Stockholm.

Two of Eric's siblings, Ann (Born in 1966) and John (Born in 1968) preceeded him. A younger brother James was born in 1972. Eric's mother, Jane Dermid Wiberg was a native of Scarsdale New York. His Dad, Sten, was Consul General to Sweden for The Bahamas and was domiciled in Nassau. He later became the Dean of Consular Corp in The Bahamas and then Head of the Consular Corp for The Caribbean. In civics, Sten served a term as president of Rotary West Nassau. Eric remembers him being a very congenial person who was a consensus builder. Sten also served as Head of the Hotel Association and was the owner of Cable Beach Manor Hotel 1966-2020. His mother, Eric recalls as strong and resolute, a tennis champion whose name stands in the Hall of Fame at the Bahamas Tennis Association.

As a primary school student, Eric attended the

Lyford Cay School from 1975 to 1980 and then St. Andrews from 1980 until 1983 for secondary education, where he recalls Mr. Harding as being his favourite teacher. After St. Andrews he went on to Eagle Brook School 1983-86 and then Matthew & St. George School in Newport, Rhode Island, graduating in 1989.

Launching into the world of work, Eric helped with running tankers from the shore for three years, then went to Singapore and worked on a passenger boat, and as a captain. He would go on to write 40 books on maritime matters and World War II history. He has published a thousand articles, addressed sixty audiences worldwide, and has appeared on film, television, radio and podcasts a dozen times for audiences in Spain, France, Norway, The Bahamas and the U.S.A. During 2022, his team found ten World War II aircraft in The Bahamas.

In 2019, the U.S. Congress used Eric's research to issue medals to ten U.S. Navy aviators for sinking German U Boat U84. He has founded companies in yacht delivery, (24) publishing, (14) research, recruiting, real estate, and trucking. Eric is licensed as a 100 ton captain since 1995 and in Maritime Law since

2005. He holds degrees or certificates from six institutions in the U.S., United Kingdom and Portugal.

He left The Bahamas at the age of 13 for boarding schools in New England and enrolled in Boston College in 1989. At the age of 18 he was hired to race to Bermuda. At one point he sailed as Mate from Antigua to Europe to attend Oxford for the BC Honours program. After self-publishing five collections of writing, he sailed from Panama to New Zealand, becoming Captain in the Galapagos of a 68 ft. wood hull sailboat. This was in 1994.

In 1995 Eric moved to Singapore for three years to commercially operate a fleet of tanker ships. It was while in this phase of his adventures that he had to deal with the loss of four crew members in separate incidents. These ranged from explosions to groundings, suicide, hijacking, rocket and knife attacks.

He returned to Newport to write in the off season and deliver yachts to and from the Caribbean. Said deliveries had adventures that included falling overboard in a storm. In his travel miles, Eric has boarded 40 vessels, operated 150 vessels, covered 80K nautical miles by sea, and he has sailed to or from Bermuda thirty two times.

In 2005 he became a maritime lawyer in the State of Massachusetts and his career in writing has been focused on maritime non-fiction. In 2009 he founded a company called Island Books. It has published 34 clients from The Bahamas to Asia. This includes some of his own works.

Eric also served as Market Manager for McAllister Towing from 2013 to 2019. I asked Eric, what maxims he lives by in good times and bad. He gave the wisdom passed on from his parents. His dad told him to always give back and his mother taught him tenacity in her advice to, "Never give up."

As far as interesting persons he encountered along the way, Eric explained that he is a big fan of

the work of Bob Marley. When Marley came out to Nassau in 1979 to give a concert, Eric got to see him and his team at the basketball court where they were staying in Cable Beach, not far from the Wiberg residence. The song, "I'm Hurting Inside", appealed to a young Eric. Other songs were "High Tide or Low Tide", "Ride Natty Ride", and "I Know A Place".

Two persons he got to meet were Dame Margaret Thatcher on one occasion and Baron Chris Patton, last Governor of Hong Kong and later Chancellor at Oxford, on another. Both of these he met at his family Christmas party. For the Governor, Eric had been sent to take the invitation.

In his travels he observed beautiful scenery in many countries, from Asia to Africa to North America. But he says he holds a special place for Elizabeth Harbour, Exuma and Castle Island, Acklins.

It would be appropriate to end with a maxim Eric sub-



scribes to from the philosopher Goethe: "Whatever you dream. You can do. Begin it."



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