

Helen Armour - Where are you now?

1. Which Raleigh expedition did you do?

Zebu 1C – Bahamas, Jamaica, Honduras, Panama in 1985

2. What are you doing now and where are you living?

I live in Hove, on the south coast, and I now run a small business specialising in tall ship charters called Red Sky Sailing. We organise ship charters for corporate events (e.g. providing spectator vessels at the major international sailing events in the UK and Europe including, Vendee Globe, Volvo Ocean Race, America's Cup, Cowes Week), team building events, youth voyages, tall ship experience days, sailing holidays and providing ships for maritime festivals around the country.



3. What impact did Raleigh have on your life?

Back at the time I suppose I would have been classed as having had an under-privileged childhood, being one of five children with a single parent – my father having died when I was seven. So Raleigh was my first chance to feel I was competing on an equal footing with my peers and discover my own potential. It is impossible to say 24 years later whether or not I would have achieved the same success without Raleigh but it certainly set me off in the right direction. Initially it singled me out as someone different and ambitious and gave me the insight into opportunities I had not imagined. The experience is still something I carry with me and refer to from time to time. It would be interesting to see what the rest of our group are now doing but, unfortunately, we have lost contact over the years.

4. Please add any other comments or anecdotes below

I had followed Operation Drake when I was about 15 years old and at that stage set my life's ambition to sail around the world. I was one of the first to apply for Operation Raleigh and gave up my job in pharmacy to sail on Zebu from Bahamas to Panama in spring 1985. Since then I have worked in the travel and leisure industry with my passion for sailing still my biggest influence.

During the 1990s I volunteered on a number of voyages for the Sail Training Association (now Tall Ship Youth Trust) and eventually I realised my dream in 2000/01 when I sailed around the world on the BT Global Challenge. After that the new dream was to make my passion for sailing into my income and in 2004 I set up Red Sky Sailing.

Raleigh