

# BERMUDA FERRYBOAT RIDE A PLEASURE CRUISE

by Brian Owens

HAMILTON, Bermuda—When in Bermuda, think water, not land, and you're on the right track. Especially when it comes to transportation.

That's the message from Hubert Trott, captain of the Triton ferryboat, which makes seven trips a day, except Sundays and holidays, from Hamilton to Somerset village, an inviting hamlet at the western end of the island.

The leisurely 45-minute trip to Somerset is a veritable pleasure tour into another world. For a small extra fee, you can take your moped or bicycle with you to combine a water-and-land tour.

Trott, wearing a captain's cap and a double-breasted blue blazer with nautical buttons, has served as a captain on five government-operated ferryboats for 28 years.

"This ferry never stops unless there's very bad weather. She runs 12 hours a day, non-stop," says Trott, whose weathered face and large, calloused hands fit the classic image of a seadog.

At the Hamilton ferry terminal, commuters and tourist passengers are assisted across a gangplank by Trott and two crew members. Trott then guns the twin diesel engines and the mustard-and-black coloured ferryboat glides past the looming structure of a white-hulled cruise ship and out of Hamilton Harbour.

Behind a forest of masts is the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club. Further along the starboard shore is the pink Princess Hotel, its majestic balconies reflected in today's unusually calm harbour waters. And beyond is Point Shares, where some of Bermuda's exclusive private homes can be glimpsed from the water.

Trott points the vessel toward Hinson's Island, one of the largest and most residential of a galaxy of islands rimming Hamilton

Harbour. The 30 or more households on Hinson's use their own boats to reach the mainland. There is also a public wharf where any one of the ferryboat fleet will stop if signalled, either by a flag being run up the wharf's flagpole, or by a switch being thrown to light two red beacons on the pole after sunset.

"Ships used to pass through here before they blasted open Two Rock Passage (current route for ships to the harbour)," says Trott as he maneuvers through Timlin's Narrows, a channel separating Hinson's and Marshall's Islands. Suddenly many more islands, large and small, are sprawled out ahead.

These islands, some of which served in the 19th century as quarantine stations and also as prisoner of war (POW) camps, have fascinating but grim histories. But thoughts of camp deprivations are difficult to imagine among the quaint pink beaches and homes nestled around the tranquil coves in this fairyland archipelago.

The Triton approaches Ports Island, once a quarantine station and now a popular camping and picnic site. Off the port side is Darrell's Island, which has a colourful history. It once housed over 1,000 POWs in a self-governed camp with their own church, library, school, dining and wash tents. In the 1930s, it became a marine airport for the Pan Am clippers bringing tourists to Bermuda. Later here, a company produced films for TV broadcast overseas. Unfortunately, Hollywood-in-the-Atlantic didn't survive very long.

West of Darrell's is Burt Island, also known as Skeeters' or Murderers' Island, because five executed murderers are buried there. One of them, Edward Skeeters, murdered his wife, Anna, and dumped her body in the sound with an 80-pound boulder attached. By a quirk of fate, the body was discovered and Skeeters was

tried and hanged in 1879. The 80-pound boulder was used as his headstone.

We passed a dozen smaller islands on the starboard side and emerged into the open waters of Great Sound where another large cruise ship was at anchor. "She's too big to dock in Hamilton," Trott explains.

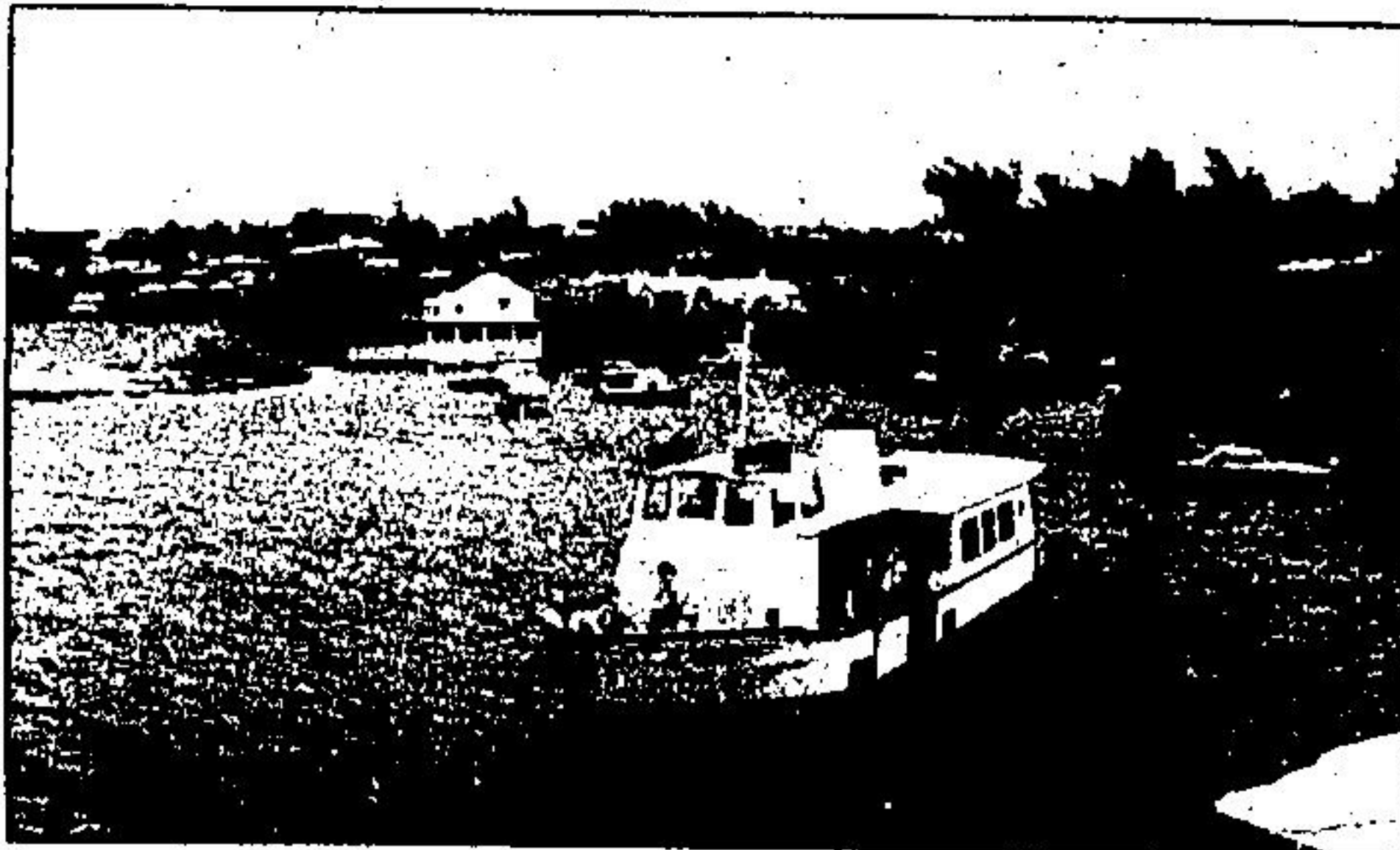
The ferryboat ride to Somerset crosses the Great Sound, a scenic body of water enclosed on three sides by the hooked-shaped main islands of Bermuda. Along the route, five parishes come into view. Clockwise, from Hamilton, they are Pembroke, Paget, Warwick, Southampton, and Sandys.

Directly ahead is the first of three stops in

Sandys Parish: Somerset Bridge, which locals proudly claim is the smallest draw-bridge in the world. Within five minutes, the Triton crew has helped off-load, then load new passengers and their mopeds and started for the next destination, Cavello Bay.

Final stop is Wafford Bridge, located five minutes by foot from Somerset village. The lunchtime crowd on the terrace of the nearby Village Inn waves to passengers on the departing ferryboat.

For further information call Roos Travel 877-0138.



## BUS FERRY SHUTTLE

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