



CAUTION

to the  
*Wind*

Linda K. Ford

# *Caution to the Wind*

by Linda K. Ford

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*Route Travelled*





# Chapter 1

## *A Dream or Reality*

Looking back now, I can remember these words clearly and distinctly.

“For many years, going back as far as I can remember, I’ve had a yearning to sail to England,” said Geoff, one sunny spring afternoon. We were sitting on a cliff along the dramatic coastline of New Zealand’s east coast at the time, near the small town of Kaikoura. The towering peaks of the lightly snow-capped mountains glistened in the distance as the grey seals lazed on the rocks below.

He continued, his voice vibrating a passion from deep within. “I’ve reached a stage in my life where if I don’t make the attempt now, it may be lost forever.” He stood up to pace back and forth; the expression on his face deadly serious.

“Lin,” he said as he reached out for my hand. Since meeting you, I can see how together we can make this dream become a reality. Would you dare to plan such an adventure with me?”

*The only sound to be heard was the surf sporadically pounding against the shore, swirling the long strands of kelp, as it heaved onto the stony grey surface.*

At this stage, I had not known Geoff long, but the mere idea touched my sense of adventure. Thoughts speedily race through my mind, as there was much to consider. For some weeks after, Geoff and I discussed our options. My main concern was my two children, Mathew and Nicole, who had been living with me since the breakup with my husband, years before. Geoff believed it to be too risky to take them with us, having never attempted an overseas passage.

We estimated that it could take up to 3-4 years to arrange and around 15 months to sail to England. After many hours of deliberation, I decided to talk to my ex-husband, Phillip, to see if he would have the children live with him during this time. I planned to have them join me at some stage of the journey. It was this thought that made it more manageable.

*I never realized at the time how this conversation and my initial decision to sail would, in the future affect my life and my children's so dramatically.*

As I approached Phillip's home, I was incredibly nervous. I was on the brink of turning back. A nagging doubt replayed in my mind. I wondered, *Am I crazy...*