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B.C. man's killers may finally face justice

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It's unclear why Richmond native Stuart Robert Glass was sailing off the coast of Cambodia, back in August 1978, on a little yacht named Foxy Lady, when a patrol boat of the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime appeared out of the haze.

He might have been on his way to Bangkok to pick up a load of Thai marijuana. Perhaps he was just there for fun and adventure.

Whatever the reason, Stuart Glass, who was only 27, was gunned down in a hail of bullets -the only Canadian to die, along with two million Cambodians, in one of the 20th-century's largest mass murders.

The fate of Glass's pals, a New Zealander and an Englishman, would be far worse.

Now, 33 years later, four top leaders of Democratic Kampuchea -as the xenophobic Khmer Rouge called their regime -will face a United Nations-backed tribunal on the outskirts of Phnom Penh. Their trial begins June 27.

In July 2010, the tribunal sentenced Kaing Guek Eav, alias Duch -the commandant of Democratic Kampuchea's preeminent death house -to 30 years in prison.

In retrospect, Stuart Glass's family and friends aren't surprised the young Richmond man died the way he did. "If we did anything adventurous, we really were worried," recalls Stuart's cousin, Alec Dutt. "But Stuart was different. He would take on an adventure as if it meant something different."

"I distinctly remember him telling me 'I've got a feeling that I'm gonna die young'," says Stu's old pal, Roy Delong.

"And I'd say, 'Sure, right.' You kind of blow it off."

Glass was born in London, England, moving to B.C. with his family when he was five. In 1972, he returned to London to live, work and pursue risky ventures. In the summer of 1973, as he re-entered Britain from a trip to Morocco, customs officers discovered 176 pounds of plastic-wrapped hashish stuffed inside a false gas tank in his blue Vauxhall.

Six months in jail didn't reform Stu. He travelled the Hippie Trail to India, and from there down to Australia, ending up in northern Darwin. There, he and a Kiwi friend named Kerry Hamill bought a traditional Malaysian yacht named Foxy Lady. Other contacts were forged. A local heroin addict named "Peter" (not his real name) claims to have

hatched a plan with Stu to smuggle marijuana from Bangkok to New Zealand. The claim cannot be corroborated.

What is known is that Foxy Lady sailed from Darwin to Singapore, and then up the Strait of Malacca to lovely Phuket. A few months later, on the other side of the Malaysian peninsula, Stu and Kerry met a young British wanderer named John Dewhirst. "Don't forget to come back," Christine Rohani-Longuet, now in her 70s, recalls calling out as the boys glided out to sea on the afternoon of Aug. 7, 1978. She would be the last friend to see them alive.

Five days later, near a speck of sand and forest named Koh Tang, Foxy Lady was seized by a patrol vessel of the Democratic Kampuchean navy.

Glass and Kerry should have avoided the area. For years, the Khmer Rouge had been waging a vicious war against their arch-nemesis, neighbouring Communist Vietnam.

Hundreds of boats had been captured and their crews "smashed." Just three months earlier, a pair of American yachtsmen had been arrested.

Stu -spared the worst -was shot and killed in a hail of machine gunfire.

Kerry and John were trucked off to Comrade Duch's S-21 death house for months of torture. In mid-October 1978, in front of a former evangelical church, their throats were cut and their bodies burned to bone and ash.

Four more yachtsmen -two Americans and two Australians -would suffer the same fate in the regime's closing days.

It would take Stuart's mom 17 months to find all this out, in the Jan. 4, 1980, edition of The Vancouver Sun. "Canadian believed among victims: 12 'spies' executed in Cambodia," the headline read.

Stuart's family never spoke publicly about his death. Having refused to recognize Cambodia's new Vietnameseinstalled regime, Ottawa was unable to investigate. Over the next 30 years, Glass would come to be known solely by his name and nationality. Duch's 2009 trial briefly retrieved the nine murdered yachtsmen's horrific stories from oblivion.

The tribunal's second trial, due to start on June 27, may reveal more. One of the four aging defendants, Khmer Rouge Foreign Minister Ieng Sary, would have known about the young mariners. Pol Pot's right-hand man, Nuon Chea, was the one who ordered them killed and their bodies burned to ashes, Duch testified at his trial. The yachtsmen's families are glad to see justice finally served, but dismayed by the threatened dismissal of a third case involving the chief of the Khmer Rouge navy. Meas Mut, a self-professed Buddhist, says he knows nothing. However, Mut "lies about virtually everything, as far as I can determine," an informed tribunal observer quips.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen -a former Khmer Rouge officer himself -has stated that people of Mut's rank should not go on trial.

Although the Canadian government has contributed \$2.5 million US to the tribunal, it won't even confirm that a Canadian was killed by the Khmer Rouge.

"We have no comment on this case," an External Affairs spokesman says.

"As the full details of the investigation remain confidential, we cannot comment on whether a Canadian citizen has been identified as a victim."

Meanwhile, Glass's family and friends are philosophical about the unfolding trial of aging Khmer Rouge chiefs.

"They're going to die and face their maker," says one cousin.

Roy DeLong, who chummed with Stuart in the early 1970s, is less philosophical. "[Meas Mut] isn't someone we'd pursue to Pakistan and kill," says DeLong. "If you don't pursue him, we might as well shut up. We sit here and talk high and mighty, preaching to others about human rights. Hey, one of our own citizens was killed. Let's put the guy on trial."

Whoever ends up being tried for these 30-year-old crimes, some questions about Foxy Lady's last voyage may never be resolved.

Were Stu and his pals travelling to Bangkok to pick up a load of "Buddha sticks"? What became of his body and personal effects? Questions like these hang like humidity over the warm waters of the northern Gulf of Thailand.

Dave Kattenburg is the author of *Foxy Lady: Truth, Memory and the Death of Western Yachtsmen in Democratic Kampuchea* - the first full account of Stuart Glass's life and death.