



# Classic Yachting

June, 2009

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER BY AND FOR ALL THE FLEETS OF THE CLASSIC YACHT ASSOCIATION

## Canadian Fleet Report – Coming Home

by Robin Hutchinson, Member #1232, Canadian Fleet, MV *Sannox*

One lovely, late summer day a few years ago, my wife and I stopped in at Vesuvius Bay on Salt Spring Island for a pub dinner on our way back home to Boat Harbour in our little outboard runabout, after a magical day at Butchart Gardens. As we made fast, my eyes were drawn to a lovely classic yacht tied up to the other side of the float. Inching up to her as close as I could without falling in, I was admiring her lovely varnished cabinsides when a friendly head popped out of the wheelhouse. "Hi! Want a varnish brush? My name is Mike O'Brien".

Somewhat sheepishly I explained that, besides her fine lines, two things intrigued me about his boat – her general 1920's appearance, and her name, *Euphemia*. I explained that my mother's middle name had been Euphemia and that my father had owned a smaller but somewhat similar boat a great many years ago, which, over the years, had become a family legend, a myth, an icon. "Probably long since gone to Davy Jones's locker," I said, "or chopped into firewood". "Maybe not." said Mike, "What was her name?" "*Sannox*" I replied.

Mike disappeared below and came back with the Classic Yacht Association registry. "*Sannox*" he said flipping through to the S section, "is alive and well and living in Bellingham."

*Sannox* was designed and built by the brothers Eizo and Yoshizo Kobayakawa in Caulfield (West Vancouver) in 1920 for the Vancouver Boat Show. She was launched as the *Fer-Lu*, but her name was changed to *Sannox* in 1924 by a new owner, possibly a home-sick Scot (*Sannox* is the name of a Scottish county). My father bought a half interest in her in about 1943. The other half owner, also from Calgary, never cruised aboard her without my father, and I have always regarded her as totally my father's boat. All my family have treasured a picture of our Dad in the wheelhouse, looking like the happiest man alive.



Robin Hutchinson's father  
at the helm of *Sannox*



*Sannox* today.

One restless autumn night a few months later, I could not sleep. To avoid disturbing my wife with my squirming and rolling about, I slipped out of bed and went to my computer. Idly, I went into Google and for no good reason at all I typed in "*Sannox*". What then flashed up on the screen knocked me back in my chair ... SANNOX FOR SALE!

What could I do? It was meant to be.

She needed work. There were endless setbacks and delays. Friends and relatives walked (or ran) away from becoming partners. I had to borrow all the money. My wife became icy. My older brother gave me hell. "You're making a very big mistake." he said, wagging his finger at me. But finally, ten months after my offer had been accepted, she was ready to come home to Canada.

One windy, choppy, late September day, I took the wheel and started out from Bellingham, WA, to Sidney BC, accompanied by the previous owner, Don, and my nephew, Brian. The voyage was not uneventful. It was very rough. The dinghy almost flew off the top of the cabin. The hydraulic steering malfunctioned and the boat went around in circles for a while. The previous owner looked at me quizzically. "Maybe we should go back." he said. I chewed on this for a minute, and then replied, "No. We'll press on." He began to whistle tunelessly. He did not look happy. Neither did my nephew. Then the engine quit. Cold. A passing couple in a stylish piece of Tupperware tried half-heartedly to give us a tow, but quickly gave up and sailed on, bickering furiously. After a certain amount of aimless poking and prodding, the engine started again. We pressed on.

Canada was almost in sight when we found ourselves staring down the barrels of a twin .50 caliber machine gun mounted on the bow of a very menacing looking US Coast Guard cutter. We were boarded by a couple of heavily armed teenagers who proceeded to inspect us. Satisfied that we posed no threat, they wished us a courteous farewell and we sailed on to the customs dock in Sidney. The *Sannox* was home, in Canada at last. It took me 45 minutes to stop smiling.

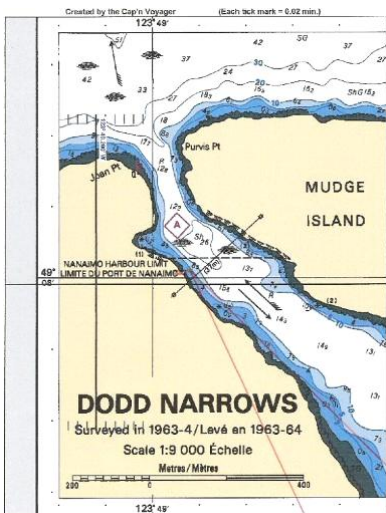


Chart of Dodd Narrows, notice it is measured in metres .. not miles!



Dodd Narrows.

However, the *Odyssey* was not entirely finished. The next day, on our way north to Nanaimo through Sansum Narrows, the engine quit cold again. Replacing the coil with a new one bought that morning in Sidney did not help. While I was working in the engine compartment with Brian, I heard voices asking if we needed help. I muttered something rude and somewhat negative but my wife who had by now joined us and was up on deck, replied sweetly, "Yes please." We were expertly towed to a private dock by two men in a rubber dinghy, invited to a gourmet dinner in their cottage, and generally treated like visiting royalty. The next morning, after a hearty breakfast, our hosts trooped down to the dock and got the engine going again (the trouble was a wire that had vibrated loose). Aside from the steering getting sloppy just as we entered Dodd Narrows against the tide, the rest of the trip to her new home in Nanaimo was uneventful. The *Sannox* was finally home!



## Southern California Fleet Report

by Christine Rohde, International Director and SC Rear Commodore

Southern California Opening Day, March 21, was held aboard The *Queen Mary*, a CYA honorary member. A full contingent of our members gathered to celebrate the 2009 season in the Chelsea Room, overlooking the city and harbor of Long Beach. Commodore Dennis Ballard officiated and was pleased to officially present Sandy and Paul Fredericks with their member burgee and plaque as the newest owners of *Alura II*, formerly Bill and Anna Erving's 1929 54' Lawley. She now



calls Channel Islands home.

Following a tasty lunch we informally toured "the *Queen*", especially enjoying the restored bridge with adjoining recreated officer's staterooms, radio room, and nav station. The actual *QM* museum is at the stern of the ship. As you descend into the depths of the engine room, it is truly a journey back in time. Some of the gears alone are eight feet in



diameter, with teeth the size of a respectable wine opener (a comparison we can all relate to!). In addition to recreated staterooms, dinner lounge, and beauty salon, one of the props can be viewed in a water filled tank that is just surreal!

Our April Affiliates BBQ and Auction was an outstanding success more than doubling our income from last year. The Hawaiian theme was great fun; and the dressed up pooch parade was a sight to see. Several special items have now found a home at the local San Pedro Yacht



Club clubhouse. Rick Olson's tropical punch – with secret ingredients – was an easy attitude adjustment to the leisurely island lifestyle.

On May 16 we were honored to be able to share in one of Scottie Dobson's last wishes. A contingent of six boats led by *Riptide* headed out past Angels Gate to offer her ashes to the Pacific Ocean where, in Bruce's words, "Now, as she told me many times, we can stroll on any beach and talk to her." Beautiful roses were tossed in the sea by

each of us in her memory and then we appropriately shared memories with friends and an afternoon dock party. In addition to *Riptide*, the entourage included *Enchantress*, *Gracie*, *Miriam*, *Mindful*, and *Madrigal*.

Lastly, we are looking forward to an encore trip in June to Emerald Bay on Catalina Island as guests of the Corsair Yacht Club, a long established active club with a perfectly built out picnic facility nestled in a canyon above the Bay. Last year, our then Commodore Tom Brown facilitated a weekend at this new destination which looks to become a most popular annual event. Our boats included *Riptide*, *Mindful*, *Gracie*, *Sparkle*, *Enchantress*, and affiliate *Parrothead*. We were invited to join Corsair for their weekend sailing regatta and all had a fantastic time. The water is truly clear and "emerald" and between the huge BBQ grill, picnic tables, and the unending punch bowl, it was a very social weekend. Saturday night we were partying on *Sparkle* and ready to call it a night a little after 11pm, when Corsair's Commodore and crew "dinghy'd" up. They were heartily welcomed, so we partied awhile longer. Again, we made great new friends and are looking forward to 2009.

In closing, I've discovered recently what a small world we live in, and

how connected we in CYA are – a discovery that keeps unfolding. In my conversation with Ann Hay for this newsletter we discovered that as kids we were both Camp Fire Girls in the Pacific Northwest and both attended their Camp Sealth on Vashon Island at about the same time. This brought back fond memories for both of us, which we'd not thought about in years. Chip and Kristin Kochel live just a couple of blocks from my old home in Clyde



Hill (Bellevue), WA, and I hope to visit my old home next time I'm in the area. And just this past weekend Tom Brown was talking with Terri and Larry Walker and they discovered that both of their decades-old family homes at Lake Arrowhead in the mountains outside Los Angeles are just a block apart!!!! There's just a great magnetism to CYA friends!!

Enjoy your summer!!



## Northern California Fleet Report – Restoration of the ESLO

by Tom Clothier, International Director and NC Historian

ESLO is a 1940 double-ended raised-deck cruiser – a beautiful one-design! The name ESLO comes from the Norwegian town of the same name just outside of Oslo. The builder, Mr. Lowell A. Netherland, was a native of Norway and learned the boat building trade there, thus the name and thus a double ender.

Finding and purchasing an original untouched "classic" presented a challenge, an opportunity, and an obvious test of one's sanity. The ESLO is a perfect example of such a find.

The ESLO was designed by Lowell Netherland and built in Brisbane, California, in 1940. He used the boat extensively

in the San Francisco Bay and coastal waters for over 25 years and in 1968 sold it to Edward Galloway, a writer, who lived on board until his death in 1980. The ESLO sat untouched in its berth from 1980 until our purchase in 1992.

Needless to say, the elements and the neglect had taken their toll. Over 3,000 hours were spent returning ESLO to health. But the restoration was completed in 1998. The chronology of getting from "there" to "here" was not simple and can only be appreciated by "classic" owners. After all, a criteria for owning a classic is to be certifiably mentally unbalanced.

Embarking on this project was not a blind undertaking. Many hours of investigation prior to purchase uncovered a sound vessel of heavy construction that had been cosmetically abandoned and mechanically neglected. Although ESLO had not been hauled in over 15 years, the risk of purchase was lessened due to the use of Port Orford Cedar for the hull planking - worms hate Port Orford Cedar! Encouraged by this information and the obvious potential that we saw, we decided to proceed.



Now the Story. The ESLO is a raised deck, double-ended, cruiser, 47' in length with a beam of 12'9" and a draft of just over 4'9". The hull is 1.5" Port Orford Cedar over 2-3/4" sawn oak frames on 10" centers and has a displacement of over 25 tons. Power was from a Grey Marine 671 Detroit Diesel Model HN-9, with

225 horsepower (replaced in 1999 with a remanufactured Detroit 671-N). Immediately after purchase the boat was hauled and the hull stripped bare from the keel to 6" above the water line. While out of the water and prior to applying the bottom paint, a dry survey was done and everything below the water line passed with flying colors. Not so for some of the areas on the house and forward deck.

The starting point for the restoration was obvious since ESLO would not be kept in a covered berth. Deck and house coverings needed to be addressed immediately. These areas were covered with fiberglass applied in the early 1970's. The fiberglass extended over the toe rails and rubs rails and was in very poor condition. Since time had demonstrated repeatedly that this "concept" in wood protection was not the answer it was thought to be, all of the fiberglass was removed. The decks were prepared, treated, and then coated with a water barrier high build epoxy. A non-skid was patterned and recoated with epoxy prior to applying the deck enamel.

This done, work began on the interior. All of the wiring was removed and schematics were drawn for replacement and to provide for increased future electrical requirements. The instrument console was stripped and rebuilt with new instrumentation and radios. This was cabled to a new DC electric panel and then to the two new battery banks. Similarly the AC panel and all AC wiring was replaced and incorporated with a Westerbeke 4.5 KW generator. Installation of the generator required relocation and reframing of the starboard fuel tank and construction and installation of the generator platform.

In the galley all new cabinetry and tile was installed which included a built in microwave and stained glass windows in the doors, custom made by B.H. Enterprises, (Bob Hamilton, ESQ.). An AC/DC Norcold refrigerator, four-

burner propane stove with oven completed the galley package. A new sole of 1/4" sawn oak stained mahogany replaced the original linoleum flooring. In the salon, generous interior mahogany trim was added along with paint, wallpaper, and upholstery to emphasize the period. Sconces on the bulkhead provide all new interior lighting.



In the forward stateroom, the only answer was to start over. The bunks were on port and starboard and a forward bulkhead contained cabinetry for storage. The head was on the port side, "doorless", and minute. The shower was on the starboard side and drained directly into the bilge and the entire area was finished in 4" stainless steel tiles. This area was gutted to provide for a functional design. The shower was relocated to the port side and a sump pump installed for overboard discharge. The head was enlarged, an electric sanitation device installed, and all cabinetry was replaced. The forward bulkhead was removed and two new 100-gallon water tanks added. The bunks were moved forward and framed around the tanks. The original shower became a hanging locker and a generous storage locker was available just aft of that for lines, bumpers, tools and miscellaneous equipment. The original ladders leading down to the stateroom and galley were replaced by installing recesses and staircases for ease of access. All of the original plumbing was removed and replaced. The redesign included a 6-gallon electric water heater plumbed through the heat exchanger. The sole was also replaced with 1/4" sawn red oak stained mahogany.

Other exterior modifications were planned and then executed as weather permitted. The original pipe railings were removed and 47 new 3' stanchions were installed. These were wrapped with twine and coated with high build epoxy and enamel. The same procedure was used to replace the pilothouse grab rails. Templates were then cut to the shape of the toe rails and 97' of 3"x2" mahogany rails were hand cut, routed, sanded, and finished. These included bow returns for the new rails to butt into the toe rails. New mahogany doors, light boards, and a forward butterfly hatch were added to complete the exterior bright work. The hull was stripped from the deck to the waterline. Routing between the planks to highlight the planking eliminated the smooth steel like appearance. The hull was then treated with penetrating epoxy and painted with two coats of high build epoxy and two coats of topside enamel.

Since we often use the boat at night, the navigation equipment was very important. An Apelco 6800 Loran and



a Ratheon RIOX radar were installed on a platform that, when not in use, recesses into the dash area behind the steering console (in 2007 the loran and GPS were replaced with a Garmin 3210 color chart plotter) and coupled to the original Benmar autopilot for hands free operation. The navigation package was completed with a Datamarine depth/speed and trip log system.

A cockpit canopy, built in the style of the pilothouse, was added and weather curtains installed. The deck above the salon was recovered and seating and safety rails were added and this increased the usable space substantially.

I have actually skimmed over the detailed planning and work that was necessary to have what was required ready when the next phase began. I can only say that it was a most rewarding experience. I am constantly asked if now, since the project is complete, if I am going to sell the ESLO and find another. My answer is simple. NO!

This is my fourth and largest restoration, and I am really enjoying the boat. Besides, although I am not too old to do

this again, I am definitely not young enough. Oh yes, how many people were involved in the work? With the exception of about 2% of the labor, just me.



## Pacific Northwest Fleet Report

by David Huchthausen, International Director and PNW Historian

The Pacific Northwest enjoys virtually endless cruising grounds from Puget Sound in the south through the emerald isles of British Columbia and into Southern Alaska. One could certainly cruise for decades without exploring all of the options. This time of the year, however, we find ourselves somewhat envious of the sunny weather and warm temperatures enjoyed by our colleagues to the south in California. Spring weather in Seattle is problematic at best, often making it difficult to plan our boating adventures. It can be 76 degrees and sunny one day and 48 degrees and rainy the next. Opening Day festivities this year started with our usual dockside rendezvous at the Seattle Yacht Club. This year's potluck was held aboard the *Kona Trader* under threatening skies and chilly weather. The weather on Saturday morning was even more dramatic with incessant drizzle and gusty breezes. The rain eased up briefly as our parade of classics made its way through the Montlake cut and past the hundreds of boats moored to the temporary log booms leading out to Lake Washington. The CYA was well represented by nearly 30 vessels. Six of us cruised over to Cozy Cove and rafted up for a fabulous lunch with a few sun breaks before heading back to the Seattle Yacht Club just in time for another major downpour. The Golden Potlatch Trophy for the best classic powerboat over forty feet went to *Shearwater* with the runner-ups *Cle Illahee* and *Olympus*. *Barnacle* was awarded the Founders Trophy for best powerboat under forty feet with runner-ups *Kay Dee II* and *Swietenia*.

The Pacific Northwest summer cruising season moves into full swing with our Past Commodores Cruise to Manzanita Bay over the Memorial Day weekend and the Edmonds Waterfront Festival the following week. Our annual cruise to benefit the Harborview Children's Hospital is scheduled for June 6, followed by the highlight of our season, the Bell Street Rendezvous, on June 20 and 21. To our knowledge, this is the largest show of classic powerboats held

anywhere. Last year's event drew about fifty vessels and thousands of delighted spectators. The Bell Street posters have become collectors' items and are available on the CYA website. Several of the early years are in limited supply so you might wish to complete your collection while they are still available.



After enduring a truly miserable August in British Columbia last year, I find myself anxious to return to the Broughton Islands near the north end of Vancouver Island. This has been an annual sojourn for *Zanzibar* for the past twelve years; but last year we never made it past Desolation Sound. We often found ourselves hunkered down in some small cove while 48-knot gales pummeled the Straits of Georgia, limiting our sojourn north. I find the Broughtons to be almost completely unspoiled and far less crowded than the Canadian Gulf islands and Desolation Sound. The 26 mile run up Johnstone Strait intimidates many boaters, but can be easily traversed by monitoring the weather closely and timing your run. We leave from Blind Channel because of the fabulous German restaurant there, and never hesitate to delay our departure or return to accommodate the weather. The Broughton Island archipelago includes hundreds of islands extending toward the mainland from Queen Charlotte Strait and eastward to Knight Inlet. There are countless beautiful anchorages throughout the Broughtons, including Laura Cove, Simoom Sound, Drury Inlet, Kwatsi Bay, and Mackenzie Sound as

well as major marinas at Sullivan Bay and Greenway Sound. The prawn feeds and campfire sing-along at the Lagoon Cove Marina are also a popular tradition. Minstrel Island has always been one of my favorite spots, but it was closed by the Canadian Government and has since been sold for development as a private retreat. Pierre and his wife Tove recently purchased the Echo Bay Marina on Gilford Island and have been busy expanding and renovating the facilities.



Pierre's hospitality is legendary and his famous Saturday night pig roast is a truly spectacular event, which should not be missed, if you're lucky enough to get in!! Billy Proctor's quaint little Museum is another cultural icon that is easily accessible by dinghy and a short hike inside Echo Bay. Pods of Orca whales frequent this area and are common in Johnstone Strait during the summer.

Mamaliliculla on Village Island was the scene of the last great Potlatch in 1921. Potlatches were banned at the time because the Canadian Government viewed them as wasteful and idolatrous. They raided the event and confiscated all of the tribal regalia, arresting many of the Chiefs. For decades these artifacts languished in the basement of a museum in Montreal, but have since been returned to the Cultural Center in Alert Bay on Cormorant Island. Several years ago the First Nations tribes returned to Mamaliliculla and now relate stories of their old traditions and ceremonies for visitors during the summer months. The

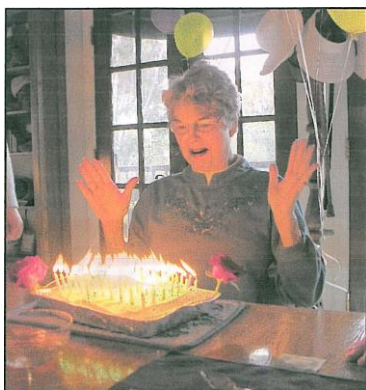


corner posts of the old Great House still stand, and probably will for decades, as do the remnants of some of the 1920's era houses. In 2003 some of the old totem poles could still be seen, gradually rotting into the overgrowth, while new ones are carved by a new generation. Alert Bay, Sointula, Port McNeil, Telegraph Cove – all lie across Queen Charlotte

Strait to the southwest and offer their own unique options for exploration. Numerous books are available on cruising the Broughtons, but I would recommend "North of Desolation Sound" by Peter Vassilopoulos for its wealth of photos and charts. If you are considering chartering in the area, there are several reputable companies who would be more than willing to help you plan an itinerary. There is occasionally a cabin open aboard *Zanzibar* for up to a week at a time, and the area is accessible via seaplane thru Kenmore Air, so it never hurts to ask. If anyone would like additional information on cruising the Broughton Islands, please do not hesitate to ask.



## ***In Memory of the First Lady of CYA, Scottie Dobson***



As the first (and so far only) female Inter/National CYA Commodore in 1998, Scottie Dobson was the epitome of the term "great lady" and a treasure to CYA. What you saw with Scottie was what you got .. a true and wonderful friend for life with no conditions or judgments. She never forgot anyone and always had a cheery greeting or kind word. She was a joy for all of us.

You might say she was old-fashioned, but she knew how to get work done while enjoying life and people at the same time. Scottie remained unwilling to use e-mail or even a typewriter. She wrote her CYA-related correspondence in longhand, and ALWAYS attached a post-it with a smiley face scribbled on it. That was tech-y enough for her!

A retired educator, when she became National Commodore, the first thing Scottie did was distribute thick booklets she and Bruce had put together that listed every single vessel that had ever been registered with CYA, but had gone missing over the years. That book was so thick it must have had 10,000 missing vessels in it. She went around the Board table and designated to each officer a certain portion of those vessels that he or she was to try to locate in the coming year, and get re-enrolled in CYA. Scottie wanted action!

A very brief summary of the many responsibilities and offices that Scottie adeptly assumed is: SC fleet event coordinator, port captain, and historian; every SC fleet office; National Historian in 1991 holding that appointed position until 2002; every National Officer position beginning in 1996, becoming Commodore in 1998; and continuing as an SC Director on the National Board until 2000.

Those who knew Scottie know what a generous, kind, and important person she was and is to our Association. The personal stories of Scottie abound. She is loved by everyone who knew her. Our prayers go with her .. our steadfast friendship remains with Bruce.

# NEW CYA members from the 1st half of 2008 – more to come!!

## New Affiliates:

Jonathan and Maria Kjaerulff  
**SELKIE**  
28' 1960 Grandy  
Tacoma, WA  
Pacific Northwest Fleet

David and Irene Nelson  
**LAZY GAL**  
52' 1969 Nelson & Hanson  
Seattle, WA  
Pacific Northwest Fleet  
Louise Weathers, sponsor

Mark Cattell  
**COQUETTE**  
45' 1966 Stephens Brothers  
Sausalito, CA  
Northern California Fleet

Stephan and Janet Hunter  
**WIDGEON**  
45' 1930 Lake Union Drydock  
Seattle, WA  
Pacific Northwest Fleet  
Diane VanDerbeek, sponsor

Bruce Ramon  
**TIT-BIT**  
22' 1941 Jensen  
Seattle, WA  
Pacific Northwest Fleet  
Louise Weathers, sponsor

## Affiliate Reinstatements:

Rex King  
Southern California Fleet

William Bayne  
Northern California Fleet

F. Todd Warner  
Southern California Fleet

Howard and Becky Hopps  
USA Fleet

## Affiliate to Classic/Vintage Transfers:

Jerry and Dorothy Matthews  
**PAT FOSS**  
50' 1942 Grandy  
Port Orchard, WA  
Pacific Northwest Fleet  
Photo courtesy of Ann Hay

Doug Simpson  
**SEASCAPE**  
46' 1956 Chris Craft  
Seattle, WA  
Pacific Northwest Fleet  
Jim Paynton, Sponsor





**New Regular Members:**

Robert Boyd and Margaret Weidner  
**MADERA**  
52' 1953 Stephens Brothers  
Seattle, WA  
Pacific Northwest Fleet  
John Murphey, sponsor  
photo courtesy of John Murphey



Edward and Ann Marie Dombroskas  
**INEVITABLE**  
23' 1957 Lyman  
Chester, CT  
USA Fleet  
Barry White, sponsor  
photo courtesy of owner



Robert Christen  
**LA CONGA**  
42' 1940 Chris Craft  
Seattle, WA  
Pacific Northwest Fleet  
Dorin Robinson, sponsor



Keith and Nicole Meicho  
**PICCOLO NAVE**  
34' 1951 Chris Craft  
Seattle, WA  
Pacific Northwest Fleet  
Larry Benson, sponsor



Michael Effler and Erin Leader  
**VIVIENNE**  
43' 1930 Stephens Brothers  
Port Orchard, WA  
Pacific Northwest Fleet  
Greg Gilbert, sponsor



Chris Stevens and Victoria D'Alvia  
**TEMPTATION**  
28' 1957 Chris Craft  
Seattle, WA  
Pacific Northwest Fleet  
Dorin Robinson, sponsor





**More New Regular Members:**

Les and Betsy Gunther  
**SEA DOG**  
55' 1932 Stephens Brothers  
Friday Harbor, WA  
Pacific Northwest Fleet  
Greg Gilbert, sponsor



Foundation 36 Inc. (Bill Watson, Managing Director)

**THUNDERBIRD**  
55' 1939 Hackercraft  
Lake Tahoe, NV  
Northern California Fleet  
Tom Clothier, sponsor



Tom and Debby Davidson  
**ALTHEA**  
38' 1929 Chris Craft  
Coeur d'Alene, ID  
Pacific Northwest Fleet  
Dorin Robinson, sponsor



Scott and Karen Rohrer  
**PICNIC**  
18' 1951 Lyman  
Seattle, WA  
Pacific Northwest Fleet  
Greg Gilbert, sponsor



Dale Tangeman and Karen Chikuami  
**SUMMER OF '46**  
36' 1946 Chris Craft  
Seattle, WA  
Pacific Northwest Fleet  
Dorin Robinson and Bill Linscott, sponsors  
Photo courtesy of Ann Hay



## Commodore's Comments – Notes On The Alaska Fleet

by Jim Sweeney, International CYA Commodore

2009 will be a unique year for the Classic Yacht Association. For the first time in our history we are losing a fleet.

The initial indication that something was afoot came in a communication from Alaska Fleet Director Don Etheridge to International Commodore David Gillespie in 2008. Don submitted his resignation from the Board of Directors and suggested that the dwindling Alaska Fleet (down to three yachts and six members) be disbanded and its members considered for transfer to another fleet.

These subjects were raised at the 2009 Annual Board Meeting in Tiburon, CA. Don's resignation from the Board of Directors was accepted but the Board took no further action pending a solution to the question of the future Fleet membership status of the Alaskans.

Based upon simple geography the USA, Canadian, and Pacific Northwest Fleets all initially seemed feasible choices. However, deliberations among the concerned parties quickly narrowed the choice down to the Canadian and Pacific Northwest Fleets. By mid April, PNW Fleet Commodore Lew Barrett had reached out to the Alaskans, discussing dues and other pertinent details of the transfer. Agreement was reached and the Alaskans are now full members of the Pacific Northwest Fleet. Unfortunately, a series of communication failures derailed the train of events and our 2009 Membership Roster mistakenly lists the former Alaska Fleet members in the Canadian fleet.

With the matter of membership resolved, the International Board of Directors' next action will be a decision on suspension of the Alaska Fleet charter. In the meantime, I have gathered a few thoughts and anecdotes from various sources to commemorate the Alaska fleet that was.



*Princeton Hall*, a CYA vessel built in Alaska in 1941 and still cruising Alaska waters.

The first thing that comes to mind is an impressive teak and engraved brass plaque hanging on the wall of my office and listing the names of all Past National and International Commodores of the Classic Yacht Association. This plaque is passed on to each new Commodore at the annual Change of Watch and has a highly unique feature: a teak and brass caulking mallet mounted on a pair of teak brackets. The mallet functions as the gavel at Board of Director meetings. The whole creation was designed by Alaska fleet founder Newt Cutler and presented to the CYA in 1990.

International Historian Margie Paynton has furnished more on the Alaska Fleet, much if it from the book "CYA: The First Thousand Members" compiled by Bruce Dobson in 2002, as follows:

"In 1974, Newt and Thelma Cutler (ALA #188) of Juneau bought a 48' 1929 boat built by the Blanchard Boat Company and still carrying the original name of *Gadget*. In the process of gathering history on *Gadget*, Newt ran across an article in a 1976 issue of SEA magazine featuring the Classic Yacht Association. He applied for membership in 1977 and was accepted. On October 29-30, 1977, the Cutlers made a special trip south to attend CYA's first "Old Fashion Day in the Park" in Marina del Rey, CA. Newt returned home anxious to recruit more Alaskan members for the CYA.

Membership in Alaska grew slowly, partly because of the great distances between ports. In fact, the Cutler's

were the only members from 1977 to 1979. The Alaskan Fleet has never been very large – only 11 members from Alaska have ever joined CYA, and the Fleet has never had more than six members in any given year. However, partly because of the special circumstances in Alaska and partly because of Newt's enthusiasm, the Board of Directors chartered Alaska as a Fleet in 1980. This was done under the By-Laws of 1976

when there was no minimum number of members required for chartering a fleet. Newt was Commodore of the Alaskan Fleet from 1980 to 1987 and later served two years as National Commodore in 1988 and 1989.

Don Etheridge of the Alaska Fleet served as National Commodore of the CYA in 1997."

I will conclude this article with a tale recalled by Steve Wilen, the CYA's unofficial "South American representative" now residing in Brazil:

"This recollection occurred many years ago – it had to have been when Don and Teresa Etheridge were quite new members of the CYA – and the Change of Watch and Board of Directors meetings were being hosted that year by the PNW Fleet at a hotel in Kirkland on the east shore of Lake Washington. For a scheduled afternoon cruise of the lake, I had taken *Kensington* to the hotel's marina, and Don and Teresa were among those who boarded for the cruise.

"Shortly after the cruise got underway, probably about 500 feet offshore, *Kensington's* steering cable snapped. Of course, the mahogany housing around the quadrant in the aft cabin had all been secured with countersunk fasteners and bungs glued over those. After some quick, but relatively careful, dismantling of the housing, the quadrant was exposed.

"Don volunteered to 'steer' using the quadrant if I would bark orders aft from the pilot house, with Teresa stationed in the trunk cabin relaying my directions on to Don in the solarium, or chicken coop, as we affectionately referred to *Kensington's* aft house. So,



with Don's head buried in the bilge and his hindquarters hiked up high, we undertook some experimental maneuvers. Needless to say, the first few attempts at this primitive form of steering did not go as intended: when I would call for starboard, Don, facing aft, would crank the quadrant to what was starboard to him, causing *Kensington* to perform a nice turn to port.

"Eventually, the three of us got the hang of it, managed to offload the

other guests back at the hotel marina dock, and headed *Kensington* slowly across Lake Washington and safely into her slip in Lake Union."

My thanks to Margie and Steve for sharing these stories. I think we can all agree that a colorful chapter of Classic Yacht Association history has drawn to a close.

Best wishes for a great summer of classic yachting!

*Postscript by Jim Sweeney:*  
*The Summer 2009 issue of the Antique and Classic Boat Society's magazine "RUDDER" will contain a feature article on the Classic Yacht Association with superb photographs by Rick Olson and Nancy Clothier. At the time I submitted that article for publication, the Alaska Fleet was still a component of the CYA and so you will find it included as such in that text.*



Mark your calendars!! **January 15-17, 2010, the Annual General Meeting of the International CYA Board of Directors and Officers and the International Change of Watch Banquet** will be hosted in Seattle by the Pacific Northwest Fleet of CYA. Watch this newsletter for more details!



**NEW** – Blazer Pocket Patch for CYA  
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