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Classic Yachting

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



1930 Schertzer *Rumrunner*
owners Glenn Drumheller and Karl Weiss

Canadian Fleet Report – Old Boats Create New Friends and Renew Family Connections

by Dave Cook, CAN Fleet Director and CAN Fleet Rear Commodore

E-mails from this newsletter's editor have arrived reminding me of the submission deadline quickly approaching. What can I write about? *Rhinegold*, in the Canadian Fleet turned 100 years old, however Mike O'Brien wrote about her in the summer 2011 CYA newsletter. Seeking inspiration, I scanned old newsletters and came across Robin Hutchinson's story about how he had become reunited with his father's vessel *Sannox* decades after the family had sold her. I realized how lucky I am to have an uninterrupted family connection with *Alondra*.



Alondra, David Edward Cook, builder.

Knowing the history of one's vessel is something that many spend years researching but is something that I take for granted because I know *Alondra's* story from the beginning of construction. My grandfather and father constructed her in the family's back yard in Point Grey, Vancouver, B.C. Throughout her journey, ownership has remained in the same family. The ambitious project was started by my grandfather when he was 65 years old, during which time he was working as a Master Shipwright with Vancouver Shipyards in Vancouver, B.C. He was ably assisted by my father who was 40 years old at the time.

Without the use of power tools, she was constructed during the early years of World War II and launched in June 1941. She is of a trunk cabin or bridge deck design that was popular in the 1920s and 1930s, carvel planked with Western Red Cedar above the waterline and Douglas Fir below. The

cabin is Honduras mahogany and there are two fir masts that accommodate 3 steadying sails. *Alondra* was enrolled in the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary through the war years thus avoiding fuel rationing and enabling her to cruise. Her identification plaque is proudly displayed in the wheelhouse.

She was not conscripted by the government and thus was able to continue to be used as a pleasure craft and retain her original paint/varnish finish and was not painted "navy grey" as many vessels were. The role of vessels in the Auxiliary was to help evacuate Vancouver Island in the event of an armed attack. All vessels in the Auxiliary were permitted to maintain full fuel tanks plus an amount for reserve, since fuel rationing continued throughout the war. *Alondra* was never called upon to carry out any emergency rescues, but was required to know the manoeuvres.

Although we never went great distances, Howe Sound and the Gulf Islands were our playground. I have fond memories of boating with my family. I was always permitted, as was my sister, to take along friends. Often there were eight or more on this 36-foot boat for two week stretches. It was quite a feat for my mother cooking on a wood stove during the heat of the summer in very compact quarters with no running water. (A NICE HOLIDAY FOR MY MOTHER!)



Third, fourth, and fifth generation owners.
Dave Cook, owner/caretaker of *Alondra*, on the left.

In a strange twist of circumstance, *Alondra* has been instrumental in reuniting lost branches of our family tree on my father's side. During World War II, food rationing was very common in Britain and it was during this period that our family would send care packages with cookies and other allowable items to the relatives in the "old country". One of the parcels sent included a picture of *Alondra* displaying her Coast Guard Auxiliary identification. Forty-five years later, a cousin living in Cornwall, England, was preparing a family tree and wanted to research the whereabouts of relatives who had left England for Canada as family contact had been lost. He had no addresses, but having the picture

of *Alondra*, he thought of the Ships Registry located in Ottawa, Canada, which he contacted and to his surprise found that the vessel was still registered. Using the registry information, he was able to contact me and learn about his distant relatives. In 1990, my British cousin along with his wife, my sister's family, and ours met in Victoria, B.C. We have remained in contact since.

We joined the Classic Yacht Association in 2000. Three years later, a new CYA member, Ted Aussem, appeared with his vessel *Privateer* (a familiar name to me). Later, while looking through some old family pictures (circa 1954), I found one taken from on board *Alondra* and there in the background of the photo was *Privateer* anchored in Snug Cove, Bowen Island. Since the two vessels' reunion, fifty-plus years later, new personal friendships have developed. It is astounding how connections are made through our wooden boats.



A family friend once said ... "The roles boats play in one's life vary from day to day and person to person, but with all our old boats, they somehow become more than simple property, and in time, some become family".



1922 Hoffar Motor Boat Company, *Privateer*



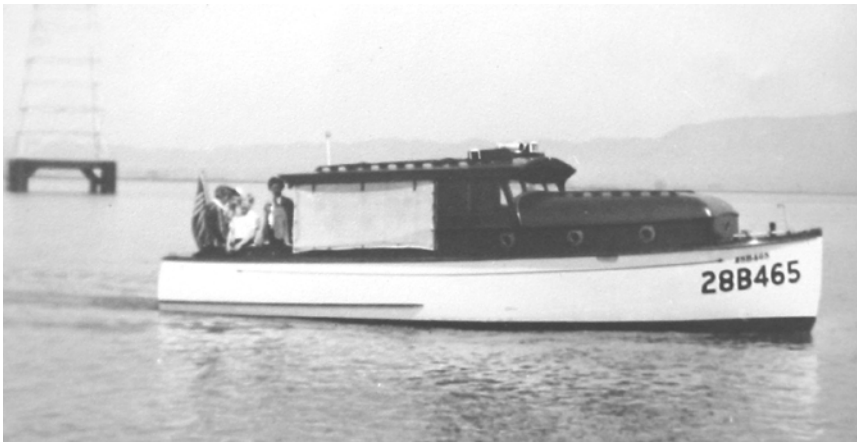
14-year-old Willow at the helm of *Alondra*



Northern California Fleet Report – The Life and Times of *Hiltot* and *Hiltot II* with the Engfer Family

by Dick Engfer, Jr., CYA member

Richard (Dick) Engfer (Sr) had no interest in boating until a visit by Ed (a friend) in the early 1940s. Ed had found a boat that neither he nor Dick could live without. They, with the agreement (?) of their wives, purchased a 27.5-foot cabin cruiser. It was built by a local San Francisco Bay builder, Sandstrom, and was powered by a Chrysler 6 which would cruise at 6 knots and maybe on a good day could make 7+ knots. When registering the boat, they had to come up with a name, thus *Hiltot* was chosen as names of their wives .. Ed's wife was Hilma .. Dick's wife Susie's nickname was Toots. This was the beginning of the Engfer family's boating on San Francisco Bay.



During WWII, recreational boating was restricted by the available supply of fuel as rationing was in effect. There were United States Coast Guard Reserve boats patrolling the bay 24 hours a day crewed by volunteers. The south bay used Redwood City as a base. Dick Engfer took part in the night patrols aboard a 38-foot picket boat. This gave Dick a lot of boating experience in a short period of time. *Hiltot* participated in such things as clearing the bay of driftwood after winter storms as it was a hazard particularly to the Mars flying boats operating in the Alameda area.

After WWII, recreational boating activities increased. *Hiltot* was moored in Alviso (near San Jose), a one time active port for supplies to and from the Santa Clara Valley. Sometime along the way, the partnership with Ed and Hilma ended with Dick and Susie carrying on with *Hiltot*. One trip out of Alviso to the Delta area sticks in the memory of Dick Jr (me – a teenager at that time) in that it was especially rough and *Hiltot* was part submarine one minute and then flying fish the next. Susie remarked of a larger boat traveling with us, "look at that boat, it is clear out of the water!" to which Dick replied, "what do you think we are doing?!"

In 1949 Dick and Susie were able to purchase *Miahelo III* from her owner, John J. Hallenbeck. The agreement required a name change, thus *Hiltot II* was put on the stern. *Miahelo III* was launched in 1940 at the Stephens Brothers yard in Stockton, California. She is 44 feet in length, 12+ feet in width, twin screw gasoline powered, carries 300 gallons of fuel and 200 gallons of water, and sleeps five (or seven if friendly).



Dick and Susie made good use of *Hiltot II* almost every weekend. They participated in the Northern California Power Cruisers Association racing (a form of predicted log that John Hallenbeck was instrumental in organizing). They put enough hours on the engines to require replacing them several times with war surplus engines Dick had purchased, managing to go through all of them. They were very good caretakers of *Hiltot II* and made a point of keeping her in original engine configuration. Original equipment included the electric systems for water, head, bilge pumps, anchor windlass, propane stove, and a fair sized ice box.

Dick and Susie had an agreement that Susie would follow her interests during weekdays, but the weekends were to be spent boating. Susie was very active as a volunteer at a local hospital (over 13,000 hours), Native Daughters of Golden West (raising funds for scholarships, etc), and cooking dinners for South Bay Yacht Club and then Bridge Marina YC. Their weekends aboard *Hiltot II* provided a rest from Dick's steel construction business, and probably accounted for

success in business and in boating. He was a "hands on boater" able to fix most any problem from varnishing to changing engines. They were CYA member number 64. Dick passed away in 1988, Susie just this year in 2011.



Susie and Dick Sr.

As my father's son (Dick Jr), I had experience with both *Hiltots*, and with sailboats, duck scull boat, US Navy, and inherited *Hiltot II* with my wife Mavis in 1988. Although not the avid boaters that Dick and Susie were, Mavis and I are reasonably active in CYA. *Hiltot II* was repowered in the 1990s from the Chrysler Royals (straight 8s) to MerCruiser V8s. Recently the electric head suffered a "terminal" injury after some 70 years of dependable service. When talking with the Groco people about a suitable replacement, they indicated they would like the old Groco head to put into their museum. I'm still thinking of reinstalling the original head if it can be rebuilt.

Perhaps there is a lesson to be learned from the Engfer family's experience in boating. It provides a break from the pressures of earning a living, it helps to slow down and do a bit of varnishing yourself, and it provides an opportunity to make new friends (boating is an equalizer), those are just a few of the benefits.



From the Bridge of *Thelonius*

By Larry Benson, CYA Commodore

I had lost touch with *Cle Illahee* for a number of years. You see, *Cle Illahee* had been my father's boat for over 20 years until age and health forced him to sell her around 1972. The next owner encountered financial problems shortly after buying her. Dorin Robinson acquired her in 1974.



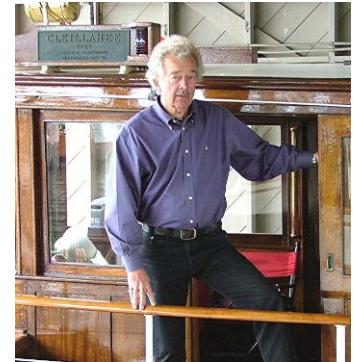
So, it was a very special and emotional moment when I encountered *Cle Illahee* and met Dorin at the Vancouver Worlds Fair in 1986. And, coincidentally, it turned out he and I lived just a few blocks apart in north Seattle. Our friendship was inevitable!

Over the ensuing years, I was a guest aboard *Cle Illahee* a number of times. I was, and still am, convinced my father's spirit is never far from her, and that he takes great pleasure in seeing her so well loved.

Late in 1999, I realized I hadn't chatted with Dorin for a while, so I called him just to catch up on things. That conversation inevitably led to my purchase of *Woodrow* (now *Makoto*), and joining the CYA. Just how it happened is still a mystery to me, but many of you know Dorin...



Most of us have had an experience, an encounter, that profoundly changed our lives. Sometimes for the better, sometimes not. Certainly, meeting Dorin and rediscovering *Cle Illahee* led to my becoming a classic boater and has truly enriched my life.



Dorin Robinson

Each year, in late summer here in the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia (PNW Fleet and CAN Fleet), there are three consecutive weekends of amazing classic boat events.

The Victoria Classic Boat Festival is held over the Canadian and USA Labor Day weekend (usually the weekend with the first Monday in September) .. the Vancouver Wooden Boat Festival is held the weekend before .. and the Port Townsend Wooden Boat Festival the weekend after. Each very unique from the others. I have been attending all three for the past several years. They are a great opportunity to meet other classic boaters, see many amazing classics, and be a welcome guest in these wonderful communities.

I urge those of you in the Canadian and PNW fleets to put one or more of these events on your boating calendar, and those from further away to journey by car or plane for a truly memorable experience.



Larry Benson
CYA International Commodore



Southern California Fleet Report – The Story of *Comfy*

by Scott Robinson, SC Fleet member



I first saw *Comfy* I think about 1995. Linda and I were at a boat show in Weirs Beach, Lake Winnepesaukee, New Hampshire. I commented that she was an interesting little cruiser, but with all the other beautiful boats at the show, it got forgotten, kind of.

First some history of Chris Craft on Lake Winnepesaukee – Irwin's Marine was one of the first dealers to sell Chris Crafts (Mertaughs was first). Irwin's has a spectacular facility, unchanged and should be on the historical register.

But let's go back to April 5, 1950, when Chase Phelps of Governors Island went to Jim Irwin and ordered a cruiser with all the bells and whistles. The hull card for *Comfy* shows she was delivered to Irwin's on June 6, 1950. We believe Phelps kept her for a couple of years. Several other names of owners have been found, but the years of ownership are not clear yet.



So, beginning in 1995 and for about ten years I ogled at *Comfy* at boat shows, but she was not for sale. The owners, Don and Judy Minor did not want to sell her, so I waited my turn. In 2007 the boat came up for sale. I said I would buy it, a deal was struck, the boat was moved next door to another boathouse that my friend Ron Largey owned. However this was not to be .. with the banking meltdown, I could not get my money. So the boat was moved back to its original boathouse, darn!

I kept in touch with Don and Judy. In March of 2010 they agreed to meet us at the ACBS show in Tavares, Florida. I met Don Minor for breakfast; we discussed the original agreement about the boat:

1. It must be kept in a boathouse.
2. It must be kept original.
3. It must be kept in show condition.
4. It must leave the lake only to go to other shows.

I gave Don a check and he said I could have the boat as soon as the ice melted on the Lake. I flew back to the Lake in May/June when the ice had melted. Don and I lowered her into the water; she swelled up great. We took her out for a ride the next day.



Since that day, I have gone back for all the shows at the Lake. I just now got back home from putting her away for the winter. The restoration shop I use (Hi Gloss Restoration of Gilford, NH, under Scott Hayes) is helping me to get her ready for next year. We have removed the engines, shafts, props, rudders, fuel and water tanks, and cleaned the bilges. All the mechanical systems are being refurbished/restored to "show" condition so in the spring we can put her together for

the summer. Just now, we tucked her away in a storage building with a sand floor to keep her from drying out. This past year has been great, even if we did not use her as much as we would have liked.

Next year we hope to be moved back for good, so we can use her every day!!!

Scott, Linda & Sparky Robinson



Pacific Northwest Fleet Report

Reflections on Lake Union – Boatyards and Boats

(Part 2 of two parts)

By Steve Wilen, CYA Life Member

The Shain Manufacturing Company had two locations, first on Westlake Avenue a short distance south of the Aurora Bridge, relocating in 1949 to Commodore Way on Salmon Bay, where for many years MARCO Marine was located. Founded by Morris "Mike" Shain, the company is remembered largely for its unique streamline Trimmer Ships with their reverse "ducktail" or "turtleback" transoms, arced canoe prow and teardrop port lights. (The yard did turn out some power boats with more traditional lines.) Shain was known as "the man who built his boats upside down" and, according to Norm Blanchard, was the only competitor with whom N. J. Blanchard had a cordial relationship. Possibly because of the yard's proximity to the Grandy yard, Shain was another early champion of Ed Monk, Sr.

Several versions exist concerning the origin of the name Trimmer Ship: Norm recalled that it evolved from Shain's previous employment as an auto upholsterer, or "trimmer"; Dave Ellis states its origin lies with Shain's prior employment as a trimmer in a Yakima upholstery shop. Be that as it may, Shain eventually also had dealerships in both Portland and San Diego. In 1956, he sold his business to MARCO, although for a time he continued to supervise construction of some of his designs that were built by MARCO.

The largest of the Trimmer Ships was the 63-foot *Zimmie* of 1935. Extensively restored in the 1990s and renamed *The Red Baron*, she was trucked from Seattle to Miami in the 1990s, where she became for several years a member of the USA Fleet. For sale in Florida on the Internet for a time, the listing has been removed, and her current status is unknown. PNW member *Forevermore* is another winsome example of a large Shain Trimmer Ship.



1945 *Forevermore*

Vic Franck's Boat Company began on Northlake Way on the north shore of Lake Union in 1927, and continued there in manufacturing and repair until recently under the founder's son, also named Vic, and grandson, Dan, who is a member of the PNW Fleet with the Franck-built *Isle* of 1927. Like the neighboring Blanchard and Grandy yards, the Franck yard also suffered a devastating fire, in 1938. Dan's grandfather managed to get all the boats out of harm's way except his own. Dan recalled that his grandfather died one year to the day after the fire, and his grandmother always maintained that it was because he was heartbroken over the loss of his boat. Following the death of the senior Vic Franck, Dan's grandmother ran the yard for years.



The Franck yard possibly had more celebrity customers than any other Lake Union yard, including Bobby Darin, Peter Fonda, and Jerry Lewis among others, but they also produced many excellent motor yachts for the less-than-famous, such as the beautiful bridge deck *Clellahee* of 1929 (photo left) and *Comrade* of 1930 (photo right), both PNW Fleet members.



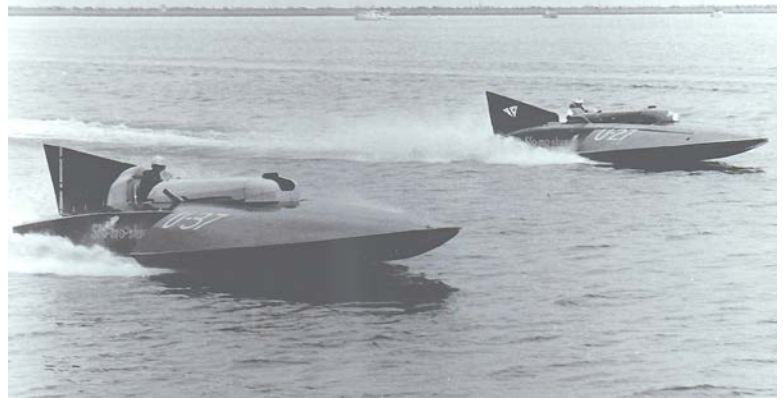
By 2006, with the changing face of the Fremont neighborhood, it had become apparent that the land occupied by Franck's had become so valuable as to nullify the yard's continued operation, and eventually it was shuttered. However, Dan Franck reports that since a buyer could not be found for the property it was decided to rebuild the dock. Vic Franck's will soon reopen as a full service repair yard, so that is indeed good news.



PNW member Jensen-built 1952 *King Gustaf*
(orig. *Tony Boy II* owned by Tony Jensen)

Although strictly speaking not on Lake Union, the Jensen Motor Boat Company is certainly one of the most colorful yards, which continues to exist through the pertinacity of the late Anchor Jensen, who, some decades ago, refused to yield his property to the surrounding University of Washington that wanted to assimilate it. The company was founded in 1925 by Anchor's father, Tony Jensen, who was also a photographer and concert violinist (a Blüthner grand piano from Leipzig still graces the living quarters above the workshop). In 1927, Tony Jensen purchased the land where the yard continues to exist, on the befittingly named Boat Street. The firm built motor yachts from a number of designers' drafting boards, including Anchor's brother, George, who turned out streamline designs such as that of the 1937 *Meteor*, recently owned by glass artist Dale Chihuly.

In the late 1940s, Anchor Jensen collaborated with Ted Jones in the design of the unlimited hydroplanes *Slo-Mo-Shun IV* (U-27) and *Slo-Mo-Shun V* (U-37). Jensen-affiliated motor yachts with CYA involvement include the fantail motor yacht *Argosy*, a recent PNW member, built in Tacoma in 1925 and completely rebuilt at the Jensen yard in 1938 after a gasoline explosion and sinking; the recent PNW and USA Fleet member *Kensington* of 1924, that had its current pilot house designed and built at the Jensen yard in 1929; and former PNW Fleet member *Carolina*. Currently, the Jensen Motor Boat Company is operated by Anchor Jensen's son DeWitt, a member of the CYA. Many in the PNW Fleet continue to haul at Jensen's for maintenance and repair work – including this author before he swallowed the anchor.



The largest of the Lake Union yards, and, along with Jensen, the only other one in operation at this writing, is Lake Union Dry Dock Company (LUDDCO) near the southeast end of the lake, founded in 1919. Sharing two attributes with Jensen's, LUDDCO is a time warp where one feels more a part of the 1920s than the 2010s, and it is currently involved in repair and maintenance rather than shipbuilding. In 1926, company owner Otis Cutting, who had designed the Taylor-Grandy built 40-foot *Lawana* in 1911, began production of stock cruisers at LUDDCO based on *Lawana's* lines.



1927 *Orba*

They were called Lake Union Dreamboats and all were 42 feet or longer. (Blanchard had begun production of its smaller Coolidge-designed stock cruisers earlier in 1924. LUDDCO Dreamboats bore a strong resemblance to the Blanchards, having a plumb bow, expansive foredeck and aft pilot house. The Blanchards are frequently referred to, albeit erroneously, as Lake Union Dreamboats.) A number of these LUDDCO Dreamboats exist and are members of the CYA, including *Orba*, *Marian II*, *Zella C*, and *Island Runner*, all in the PNW Fleet. Other LUDDCO-built yachts include the 1929 bridge deck cruiser *Pat Pending*, 50 feet extended from its original 45 feet, a member of the NC Fleet, and the 96-foot fantail motor yacht *Canim*, a member of the USA Fleet, both designed by Ted Geary.

In this article that must observe space limitations, only a few of the many extant yachts from the various Lake Union, Seattle, yards can be mentioned here. Apologies are offered to CYA members whose Lake Union-built vessels are not named; the very fact that so many continue to ply the waters from the Pacific Northwest to Lake Minnetonka to the Atlantic, and from north to south, renders it impossible to list them all, yet it also affirms the quality of boat building that was once a mainstay of this inner-city lake.



NEW CYA members – welcome!!

New Affiliate members:

Dennis and Cindy Jones
CALLISTO
45' 1961 Chris Craft
NC Fleet
Lodi, CA
John DiLillo, sponsor

Kathleen (Kit) Pingree
TEAL
78' 1927 Kruse & Banks
PNW Fleet
Friday Harbor, WA
Diane VanDerbeek, sponsor

Jay and Tara Giese
TABU
42' 1940 Chris Craft
PNW Fleet
Bellevue, WA
Jim Paynton, sponsor

Reinstatement:

Ted Hoheisel
ELEGANTE
55' 1964 Grebe
PNW Fleet
Seattle, WA

New Regular members:

Kay Calkins and Terry Miesse
GRACE
33' 1954 Chris Craft
PNW Fleet
Seattle, WA
Nancy Everds, sponsor



Vincent and Carrell Stamper
FIFER
68.5' 1928 Hoffar Beeching
PNW Fleet
Port Orchard, WA
Richard Gardner, sponsor



Keith and Jodi Olson
M II
 42' 1928 Lake Union Drydock
 PNW Fleet
 Seattle, WA
 Dorin Robinson, sponsor




NOTE to all CYA members: As the Editor of this International CYA newsletter for these past three years, I want to thank all of you, all members of CYA, all of the CYA Directors from each of our five Fleets (CAN, NC, PNW, SC, USA), and all of the International CYA Flag Officers and Board members for their support of this newsletter. Hopefully, each of our five CYA Fleets also produces a local Fleet newsletter (print, email, or online), but it seems important that all of our Fleets stay in contact with each other as well. This International CYA newsletter helps make that happen thanks to you and to our CYA Board of Directors. So, the next time one of your Fleet Directors asks you for an article for the International CYA newsletter, please say yes (as you always do) – their help and yours in making this newsletter what it is makes all the difference for CYA. For instance, one copy of each of the three most recent International CYA newsletters is mailed to every new CYA member, and the total number of memberships for all five Fleets combined in CYA that this newsletter reaches is now approaching 360 households. That is a significant number in nautical terms! This International CYA newsletter is a great venue for us to share good times with each other, to welcome all of our new members in all of our Fleets, and to reach out to yet more people who share our love of old wood cruising powerboats. So keep those photos and articles coming. Thank you!

Ann Hay
 1940 Matthews *Pied Piper*



CYA Blazer Pocket Patch
 with dual red and blue pennants
 \$25 each including shipping
 Contact Margie Paynton, CYA Historian



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 Christine Rohde, SC Vice Commodore
 Ted Crosby, USA Rear Commodore
 Ann Hay, PNW Newsletter Editor
piedpiper1940@yahoo.com
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