

# Flicka Friends

Fall 2002



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## From the Editor



## Rendezvous

January 18-19, 2003  
Bell Harbor Marina, Washington  
NW Pacific Seacraft Owners Assoc.  
Winter 2002-2003 Rendezvous

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Additional Information can be found  
on the Flicka Home page.

## Next Issue...

- BUC NET Pricing for the Flicka

## Cover Photo

s/y CARAWAY at home in England.  
*Photo by Angus Beare*

If you have a high quality photo of  
your Flicka and would like to see it on  
the cover, please let me know.

flickafriends@coslink.net



*By Tom Davison*

After a day of sailing, we ghosted into Suttons Bay. These conditions were in contrast to the winds we encountered during mid-day. We reduced sail to the point we were only flying a single reefed main. Heading home, found lighter conditions and once again all of the sails were up.

Nearing the marina, we approached a large, two mast gaff-rigged schooner anchored out. They passed us earlier in the day near Omena Point.

The wind was so light that a kayak from the schooner came out to inspect the "little" gaffer. He easily outpaced us in the light air.

After lowering the sails, we looped around the much larger schooner for a look. The people aboard seemed as interested in the Flicka as we were in the schooner.

It was a fine day of sailing with a full range of conditions and waves. Just another good day to be sailing.





## Pesto and Playa Pounding

By Bill and Liz Ronstadt

During the past 12 years, we've trailered our boats to the upper Sea of Cortez. The first seven years were with our Cape Dory Typhoon *Eurydice*; the last five aboard our Flicka s/y **SARAFINA**. We've explored the coastal waters north from San Carlos, crossed to Baja via the Midriffs from Kino Bay, and enjoyed many long weekends around Puerto Peñasco (Rocky Point), the port closest to Tucson. The harbor at Puerto Peñasco provides protection for the shrimp fleet, the Mexican Coast Guard, a few sightseeing charter boats, some pleasure craft, and a flotilla of pangas.

Puerto Peñasco is known for its dramatic 24 foot tides and gradually sloping sandy shoals. The bottom dries out for miles! We've spent more than a few sleepless nights pondering the obvious "what if we find ourselves aground?" question. It's unintentional encounters with the sandy bottom that I wish to address here.

We finally did managed to stick *Sarafina* in the sand on an ebbing tide. At the time the water level was dropping at a rate of one foot every 10 minutes. All attempts to free her from the bottom having failed, we deployed our secret weapon. The Danforth was set 50 feet to starboard at a 90° angle while the C.Q.R. was set 50 feet to port at a 90° angle.

Each rode led straight back to the corresponding genoa winch. We ground the winches until the lines were at approximately E flat, below low C, and the mast was vertical and steady. We'd created a sort of gigantic 'isometric slingshot'. It was dark by the time all the water was gone beneath our boat. So I prepared shrimp and pesto for linguini - while my wife and I toasted everyone in sight. In time *Sarafina* floated free and we resumed our passage to the harbor basin and our intended anchorage.

The whole pachanga would have been unnecessary, however, had we not been run out of the channel and into the shallows by a shrimper. I always make a point of keeping well clear of workboats and their equipment as they're bigger and are trying to make a living. But the guy driving this shrimper had another agenda.

We had *Sarafina's* sail furled and were under power at two knots on the right hand side of the channel as we progressed toward the harbor basin. We were at the halfway point when an outbound shrimper entered the channel at flank speed. He could have passed portside with plenty of margin, but instead lowered his outriggers and steered toward us as if to make a clean sweep. Indeed, he did.

We must, however, also confess to one other bit of 'playa ploughing'. This was with the Cape Dory back in '88. While searching for a suitable anchorage out of the roadstead at the mouth of Peñasco's harbor, a miscue between the forward observer, armed with a lead line, and the helmsman resulted in a zig where a zag would have been the much better choice. This was when our above method for keeping our grounded boat upright was first employed. It's was pesto that night, too. Say, maybe it hasn't been us but the damn pesto!

So if those of you who at some time in the future find yourselves high and dry - and don't want to soak your cushions or hear your topsides making crunching sounds - make sure you have the anchors and line to keep your boat upright. And as the tide continues to ebb, repeatedly inspect the anchors to make sure that they're really dug in and that your boat is built like a little brick. Then sit back and enjoy that pernicious pesto!

*Reprinted from LATITUDE 38 with permission of the editor. I was unable to locate Bill & Liz. Hope this is OK!*

## About Flicka Friends

**Flicka Friends** is a newsletter written for the people who own, crew aboard or are interested in the Flicka, a 20 foot sailing vessel designed by Bruce P. Bingham.

Based on the Newport boats of Block Island Sound, this little ship has been built from various materials from the 1970's until 2002. This includes Flickas constructed from plans obtained directly from Bruce's California office. About 400 sets of plans were sold. According to Bruce Bingham, many Flickas can be found in New Zealand Australia and Sweden.

A number of hulls were built by Nor'star and some were completed by Westerly Marine. The manufacturer of the bulk of the class is Pacific Seacraft Corporation who built 434 hulls in California.

**Flicka Friends** is published on a quarterly basis, with issues being mailed in March, June, September and December. Articles, letters, comments and photos relating to the Flicka are welcomed and encouraged.

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# My First Boat: s/y CARAWAY

*By Angus Beare*

The first stories I heard about Pacific Seacraft and the Flicka came from a good friend of mine and experienced sailor Robin Benjamin (Benjy). Benjy has made a life of small boat living. Over ten painstaking years he rescued and restored a lovely old wooden boat he named "Blown Away." After getting Blown Away shipshape he moved to Falmouth in Cornwall and plied his joinery skills on the many yachts at berth in and around Falmouth marina. There he bumped into a small, unusual and rather appealing little boat called **CARAWAY**.

**CARAWAY** had been built to order and shipped to England where her owner intended to explore the coast's of Kent and Essex. She was immaculate, sturdy, and had very appealing lines. She caught the eye. Benjy was taken aback by the boat and on first impressions laughed out loud at the audacity of such a small ship boasting so much bronze! When he took a closer look he realised that what he was looking at was a showpiece of quality in both design and craftsmanship. Few production boats had so much teak, such quality hardware, and such immaculate installations.

**CARAWAY** was to be a boat that played on Benjy's mind for a long time to come. He wrote an article for Practical Boat Owner magazine which included his own color photographs of her fittings and interior. It was to be the beginning of a story that would lead some ten years later to myself, sitting at my desk in a bank in London dreaming of my first boat.

Benjy met **CARAWAY**'s owner Julian and they became friends. Julian later invited Benjy to deliver **CARAWAY** for exhibition at the Southampton boat show and further up the coast to her new home in Kent. He couldn't wait to get her out and see



At sea aboard s/y **CARAWAY**

how she behaved. He'd been told she had lines that could be traced back over a hundred years to the lobstermen of Newport Sound. She was a tried and tested design that had safely brought many men back from the cruel sea. He was eager to sail a boat with such lineage.

On one particular occasion when the weather had been forecast as light fading winds from the South West he took **CARAWAY** to sea with a crew he'd invited for the experience to sail from Lyme Regis to Poole harbour; a fair days sail in good conditions with the only real concern being Portland Bill. Portland has a dangerous headland with a reputation for steep confused waters in wind against tide situations. The current races pass the peninsular furiously, making it critical to plan ahead with care. I have been at sea in a trawler at Portland and it takes hours to pass the headland against the tide. In a small boat such as **CARAWAY** you simply must have the tide behind you.

After a good morning's sail the barometer began to fall, the wind rapidly picked up. and Benjy and his crew Fliss could see a gale was on its

way. This had not been forecast. The met office had 'predicted' light winds 2-3 from the south west with moderate seas. But they were half way there and there was nowhere to run to so they had to carry on. Fortunately the wind was astern and the current was with them too. They were being whipped along like a spinning top as Benjy battled the tiller under double reefed main in the rising seas. The wind had risen to a force 8 gale.

After 10 hours at the helm Benjy was worn out. He didn't see the freak wave that was charging down on them. Suddenly **CARAWAY** was picked up and thrown forward. She was swung on her side and flipped over with the wave crashing over her beam. Benjy was soaked to the bone. But immediately **CARAWAY** popped back up again and like an Eider duck after a dive she shrugged off the water and flicking her tail in pleasure she busied along as if nothing had happened.

Although Fliss was inexperienced and this was her first serious sail, she took over the helm while Benjy went below to get into some dry clothes. She clung on like grim death and





# A Pacific Seacraft Flicka



In the cabin of s/y CARAWAY.

scowled every time a monster greybeard bore down on the tiny little boat. Benjy noticed that the speed log had clocked 8.91 knots in the knockdown and that was when she was travelling on her side! He tells me he has a photo of the speed log which I'm going to ask him to dig out. I think it deserves publication.

Fliss was doing a great job and despite being very scared she was a natural at the helm and no further problems were encountered. They made it safely into the sanctuary of Poole harbour and moored up exhausted but jubilant. At that time Fliss vowed never to sail again but later agreed that it was a terrific experience, the boat had done brilliantly and she would certainly have another go.

As the years went by I began to get the longing to go back to the sea. I grew up on the coast. My father was a fisherman and I'd spent almost all of my spare time fishing, swimming, sailing and generally messing about in

boats. Now I was stuck in London with a career at a desk tied to a computer and it was beginning to get me down. I'd take a few days off here and there and go to visit Benjy on Blown Away in his new home of Port Grimaud in the south of France. He lives on Blown Away with his partner Celia and their parrot Beaufort in domesticated yet confined bliss.

They work the winters doing maintenance and repair on boats in St. Tropez and spend the summers sailing the Mediterranean. I've accompanied them on trips to Sicily and various islands on the French coast sleeping in the cockpit and trying to make friends with Beaufort. I am a master at sleeping on hard boards with my feet in a locker and my head overhanging the companionway steps. Beaufort finds comfort in terrorising me by jumping on my head early in the morning and screaming horribly in my ears.

Without really considering, it consciously I had decided that I wanted

a boat. Everything seemed to be moving in that direction as if I were being guided by some invisible benign force. I had begun to reduce the amount of work I did for other people to half a year or less. I was self-employed and had worked only three months in the city for a whole year. The money was very good and it provided the means to take control of my dreams.

I would buy a boat and take it to France. I could then return to London for 6 months of the year and contract in the city when I needed more money. As I battled to devise a way of financing my dream Benjy and I discussed in scrupulous detail all the issues involved in choosing the right boat. Being a wooden boat enthusiast and accomplished ship-right Benjy could give me all the pros and cons of wooden boats from first hand experience. I went through all the possibilities, problems and benefits in my mind and actually imagined myself owning an old wooden yacht. The romance and beauty are undeniable and people were kind to old wooden boat owners. People would take notice and old seamen would come over and congratulate me on keeping the tradition alive. Many possibilities arose and if one of them had meant to be, my sailing future would have been very different.

There is a lovely old yacht designed by Albert Strange (Charm II) rotting in Brighton marina. She's a real gem and her owner knows it but as she sits there year after year rotting away he dreams of taking her far and wide but she never moves. She only rots and he's trapped by his pride into letting her fall into the sea before he finally admits he's a dreamer. If he had accepted my offer for Charm then I'd never be writing this article and since I have CARAWAY instead I have much to be grateful for. But I still wonder about her and how it might have been had that path opened up before me. It's a

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crime to let her rot and I hope some day someone rescues her. She's part of our wonderful maritime heritage and deserves better.

So it was I realised that a smaller, GRP boat with classic lines and some of the character of a wooden boat would be much more suitable for me and my needs. An old wooden boat would be a joy in many ways but I wanted to be able to sail sooner and be free of the worry of rot and worm if I decided to sail down from the med to the West African coast. I have some friends who own a lodge on the Gambia river and I dream one day of sailing down and turning up for a sun downer at Makasutu unannounced!

Benjy had told me all about **CARAWAY** and Pacific Seacraft. He wanted me to buy a Dana as he felt the Flicka would be too small for my needs. We talked loosely of going to the US and buying a second hand boat and sailing her back to England. We also talked of buying a brand new Dana if I sold my flat in London and took a giant leap of faith. A new boat would give great peace of mind and there'd be no chance of any unwanted items or DIY bodes on board.

Anyway, I decided not to sell the flat since property prices in London were soaring and I was making on the place the whole time. I looked at re-mortgage instead. At the time I was working as a contractor in a bank in London. I started to search the internet for suitable boats in the UK. I looked at the Contessa 26, one of the best and most affordable small boats available. However, I decided that the lack of headroom would be a problem and kept my eyes open for something else.

One day I noticed a Flicka for sail in the UK. This was unusual since there was only one that I knew of and that was **CARAWAY**. Could she be up for sale? I printed off the spec and sent it to Benjy. I also called up the brokers, and yes it was **CARAWAY**.

Benjy called me the following day. He'd be in England in a few weeks time to visit his brother so we could arrange a viewing. Now, the price was way out of my budget and I still thought it was only a dream. I'd been rejected by lenders since I was now self employed and had less than two

months books to show them so the finance was out of the window. I had no way of buying the boat but we decided to take a look anyway and see if we could get a sail. I'd never seen a Flicka before and couldn't wait to see the boat I'd heard so much about. We spoke to the broker and arranged to go down.

A dreadful day dawned with dark clouds, continuous cold rain and vicious winds. Utterly miserable and the worst day you could pick for a sail. We went anyway, driving to Burnham through congested roads lined with industrial estates and down to a small marina on a bleak looking estuary. A sail was out of the question and as both batteries were flat we couldn't start the engine anyway.

**CARAWAY** looked pitiful. She was covered in algae, industrial soot, was poorly tethered and looked entirely dejected. It was clear she hadn't been looked after properly for years and was in need of some love. Benjy was appalled. He couldn't believe she could have been so unloved. Such a super boat that had been so perfect when new. How could anyone pay such little respect to

something built with so much love and care? He nearly cried he was so upset.

In contrast I was ecstatic. I could see what she was and realised that her state could only work in our favour. We had bargaining power because she needed work and work means money. I knew she was the boat for me. In a funny way she reminded me of a child's toy. Everything had been built to take abuse. Hardware was chunky and appeared to have rounded edges. There were no cracks for things to fall down. The portholes were rugged and beautiful. She was dry and cosy inside despite the gale howling outside. I could stand down below and walk about.

There was teak all over and it was properly fitted. She had a clock and barometer by Sewells of London, she had instruments by Brookes and Gatehouse and her rig was of a much heavier gauge than you'd expect on a boat with an 18' waterline. There was little I could find to be negative about except the price and the plastic cutlery.

The service from the brokers was shocking. You'd think that to sell a boat one would make an effort to clean her up and entertain the potential buyer. **CARAWAY** was



Lounging on the foredeck.







filthy, neglected and we were left to wait in a shabby porta-cabin for patronising service. We left angry and felt it unlikely I'd get to buy her. Since I hadn't been able to re-mortgage I had no way of raising the cash and after a row we'd now fallen out with the brokers so we couldn't contact the owner direct. However, we had left my number with the broker in case the owner Julian was prepared to negotiate.

Later that day I got a call from Julian. He'd thrown out the brokers since they'd done such a poor job and he wanted to negotiate. This was a breakthrough. He'd accept a lot less than he'd originally wanted. Provided I pay up in full in three weeks and put a deposit down immediately. He'd keep the inflatable and life raft since I didn't want those.

What's the point in having a life raft if it's stuffed down the quarter berth? I'd rather not have one than suffer the cruel irony of drowning trying to get the liferaft on deck. Or the agony of trying to decide to either put out a Mayday or bring the liferaft on deck. So, the sale and price were agreed. Now all I had to do was raise the cash!

Oops. Slight oversight there since I didn't have the cash and had no way of raising it. Better call the bank again I decided. There must be a way. So, after being told again that there was no way I could get a raise on my mortgage without six months books I asked them if there was a good loan I could get for the amount I needed. "You only need £25,000 the lady said?". "Oh why didn't you say?". "You didn't ask?" "Well, if you only need that we can put you straight through our fast track system which means you don't have to provide proof of income and will get the money in less than 10 days!"

At last there was light at the end of the tunnel! Weeks of battling the office minds had paid off. I would be able to buy **CARAWAY**. All I had to do was borrow the deposit from my family and she would be mine.

Everything else is water under the boat. I borrowed the deposit from my mother and got the bulk of the cash from my mortgage lender. The crazy thing is that my mortgage repayments have actually gone down despite owning the boat! I was on a poor interest rate and since the financial ombudsmen have cracked down heavily on banks touting lower interest rates to new customers but not giving the same rates to existing customers they quickly put me on a better rate. Even more fortunate was the fact that my property had increased in value considerably since I bought

and, despite the extra borrowing, there was little chance of negative equity. So doing it this way was far cheaper than a marine mortgage. I learnt a valuable lesson here. Banks rob more people than people rob banks. Take advantage of them and pressure them into giving you what you need. You might just get a better deal and a boat!

With the finance sorted, I couldn't wait to get the boat. Frustratingly it was March and the weather was appalling and I wanted to start playing immediately. My contract had ended I had plenty of time and was champing at the bit. Julian had kindly offered to help me sail her part of the way to her new home and show me the ropes. Unfortunately though, he was away on business for three weeks so I had to wait. It was an agonising time for me because I wanted to play on my new boat but I had to wait.

It was to be a sad last sail for him but, since he'd decided to sell after putting only 250 hours on the engine in 9 years, I had little sympathy. He had resigned himself to a life of work and he only had himself to blame.

Finally, one beautiful morning we set sail from Burnham on Crouch marina and plugged our way with the wind on the nose out towards the North Sea and round to the Thames estuary. It was a joy to at last be setting off in my boat. I immediately felt at home on board, there was definitely a sense of happiness in the boat. It's sentimental I know but good sea boats like to go to sea and **CARAWAY** was no exception. She was determined to make a good impression on her new owner and this she succeeded in doing. The cockpit is probably the best small boat cockpit I've been in. You'd have a real job to fall out. There are comfy cushions, all the instruments are in the right place and you're protected from the elements by a rugged spray hood; a godsend beating to windward in driving rain.

Ever since I bought **CARAWAY** I've felt that I've been blessed with a guiding spirit. My father, who died only a few years ago was a keen seaman and would have loved her I'm sure. When I began to seriously think about the idea of a boat, I would wander along the beach and think about him and how he would certainly have said, "Yes, that's a good idea. Go for it but make sure you read this book first and study these charts and watch out for these shoals and be careful of spring tides," etc. He knew the sea and I feel to this day that he was watching me as I took **CARAWAY** out into the open water and onwards to her new home.

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Sunset from the cockpit.





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To celebrate the occasion and help bring **CARAWAY** round to Chichester, Benjy came over from France on an agreed date in April. He was delighted since he loved the boat and wanted to see her in good hands. There was no flexibility in time because he had much work to do on his own boat after breaking his mast when some tackle failed. So we had ten days to bring **CARAWAY** round from Gillingham to Chichester, weather permitting. If we failed I was on my own or had to find a crew.

I don't have a lot of experience yet and would have to consider the situation again in the event of getting port bound half way. In the end we were very lucky. For April we were treated to a completely unexpected heat wave and spent most of the time relaxing under motor in full sunshine with the tiller pilot steering and the cockpit cushions laid out on the foredeck.

We did however have some challenging moments. Thick fog descended for most of passage from Ramsgate to Eastbourne and we had to be particularly careful with our navigation to avoid the sandbanks, wrecks and shoals that litter this part of the south coast of England.

We had an old Garmin GPS 45 that was my fathers. It refused to locate and it was only when we had finally reached our destination that I discovered it was struggling because it had a database of waypoints in Tanzania (where my parents lived for 7 years) and was trying to find itself based on those positions! The onboard network GPS had a dodgy LCD but did at least give us a reliable position. As it turned out our dead reckoning was so good that we nearly rammed a green channel marker that suddenly leapt out of the fog right on the nose! It was just as well we were paying attention and straining hard to see through the gloom.

As we approached Dover, we considered calling the coastguard to ask for safe passage since Dover is a very busy port and ferries race in and out all day at terrifying speed. It was a mistake that we decided not to bother them and simply carry on hoping we'd been spotted on radar and be out of

danger quickly. We learned a hard lesson when just as we were opposite the entrance a huge ferry came rushing out. We turned and went parallel to it for a while and then all of

a sudden there was an enormous foghorn right behind us. Our hearts jumped in our mouths as we struggled to see what was coming. In moments a huge dark form appeared in the mist, bearing down on us at incredible speed. We turned again and headed astern of the first ferry at full speed. Benjy grabbed the aerosol foghorn that came with the boat and, as he tried to fire it, the plastic horn broke off in his hands! Our vocabulary narrowed sharply at that point to simple four letter words belted out at full volume.

The foghorn was a sick joke but the incident was typical of the way things can go wrong at sea. If something goes wrong it can spark what seems to be a snowball effect where other things start happening all at once. This phenomenon always happens exactly at the time when you least need it. It is my personal law of the sea, Beare's Law. When something goes wrong at sea it is always followed by one or more things going wrong either simultaneously or immediately after.

Just when I was wondering what would happen next

and trying to prepare for it, the depth gauge started reading 0 feet! "What next?" I thought. We carried on astern of the first ferry while the other one passed far too close for comfort to our rear. The huge monstrous black steel beast with thundering engines romped passed us like a charging buffalo.

We were safe and so we thought, but then as we went into the clear, I could make out the hazy shape of something else coming down on us. It was a huge sea-cat to port and fortunately for us it was travelling about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of it's usual speed. We eased off on the throttle and waited for it to pass. Then, breathing huge sighs of relief, we sped off (well at 4.5 knots) to safety. I wasn't convinced and for some time after I squinted into the gloom and banged on anything metallic I could get my hands on until the fog finally lifted and sunshine greeted us.



Sunset along the side of s/y CARAWAY.







It had been a sobering experience and I wondered how it would have felt had we been engineless in the windless fog. "That was a test". Exclaimed Benjy. "These things have been put up to test us and see how we perform". "It was scary wasn't it but we did ok and we survived." "Yes!", I agreed. "But next time I'm calling the coast guard or waiting for the fog to clear. Anything's better than being at the mercy of those monsters! That was terrifying!" "What did I say to you when we planned the sail in May?" asked Benjy. "Fog off Dover I replied!" "Yeah, didn't I tell you we'd get everything and we have. Sailing in the Solent is a good place to learn. When you get to the Med you'll think it's a breeze. No tides and much warmer weather."

From then on it was Eastbourne marina for the night where they kindly treated us to smelly toilets and grubby showers for the bargain price of £15 (about \$23)! Marinas are a rip-off in the UK which is why Benjy moved to France. For a 6 meter boat for one night it really is daylight robbery. In general French marinas are half the price. I pity poor French sailors making the trip across the Channel to be greeted by miserable staff, dirty facilities and ridiculous prices. I don't imagine they stay long.

Eastbourne to Brighton was a lovely sail in bright sunshine with a F2-3 on the beam for much of the way. **CARAWAY** took us by surprise by managing 4 knots in very slight airs and with a dirty hull. I couldn't wait to see how she'd go after a good scrub. We'd tried to clean her at berth by hauling her over on one side from the pontoon but couldn't do it properly. She would go over to a point and then she became very heavy. It was reassuring to get an idea of just how much weight was moulded into that solid little keel.

From Brighton we had a miserable run to Chichester. It's one of those stretches where you can't win in a small boat. The prevailing winds are always on the nose and you can only plan to have the tide on your side at best half the way. There's nowhere to run to if things go wrong and there's the peninsular of Selsey Bill to negotiate near the end. It took a horrible 12 hours punching the tide and

beating to windward under motor in a tight chop huddled under the spray hood to reach Chichester harbour. There were only two moments worthy of particular mention. A

pretty little seagull with bright black eyes followed the boat for a while flying about three feet above our heads in the cockpit. I decided it was a Little Gull when I looked it up later at home. And a struggle with a lobster pot marker caught on the rudder near Bracklesham Bay. I had images of lashing a knife to the boat hook over going over the side to cut us free before Benjy got us off going hard astern at full throttle.

I was very happy with the way **CARAWAY** behaved. The Looe channel off Selsey bill is no place to be in a small boat on anything but the mildest of days. But **CARAWAY** made us feel very secure despite some nasty looking waves rolling in from the West. I manned the helm since 'Neville' the old Navico autopilot was suffering from stress and kept giving up. Benjy lay on the forberth reading a book and all was well. **CARAWAY** slid over the waves with a very kindly motion and eventually brought us safely into Chichester where we picked up an empty mooring in the Bosham Channel for the

night. Chichester harbour is a really lovely place. A nature reserve with wetlands supporting all sorts of bird life. It's a winding estuary with several marinas and lots of cosy places to anchor up for the night. It gets very busy in the summer months but on a weekday in April, when the weather is fine, it's a joy. As well as being a safe place to keep a boat, it's a good place to learn to sail too. It has everything to challenge even the most experienced sailor. The tide can be fierce, especially in Springs and it falls incredibly quickly. In minutes you can be aground when you thought you had time to spare. Many a careless yachtsman has been caught high and dry on the Chichester bar on a falling tide and there is no more public place to be humiliated. Your incompetence is there on display for all to see for what could be a whole 6 hours. Needless to say I always take extra care to be sure there's enough water when entering or leaving Chichester harbour.

We had done the trip from Gillingham in so little time we were delighted. Only four days to do about 250 miles

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Sunset colors on the cabin.





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gave us 5 days to spare, leaving one to get Benjy to the airport. We set to work on **CARAWAY** immediately. We bought new ropes, a new battery, installed a battery charger and shore power so the batteries could be charged from the mains. I went up the mast and cleaned and polished it from top to bottom.

We serviced the engine and replaced the exhaust elbow. We scrubbed and scrubbed her all over, we cleaned the spray hood and bought some canvas treatment fluid. We serviced the winches. Then we replaced all the ropes with modern hemp style three strand. I prefer three strand since you can splice it. We re-organised the ropes so that the second reef could be put in from the cockpit using the Cunningham hole. This would mean that as it got progressively more unpleasant I wouldn't have to go to the mast. Single handed sailing would be a breeze as everything was already geared up to be

industry. If the membrane in the exhaust elbow is corroded on a Yanmar 1GM10, which is likely when the engine is so little used, sea water can get into the cylinder head and destroy the engine. When we inspected the elbow this was nearly the case as it was badly pitted. So, thank you Cellar Marine for your advice, I will recommend you to everyone I meet. If the boatyard at Burnham had been half as conscientious both the elbow and the pump would not have required attention.

The stern gland was leaking. It hadn't been re-packed since new and I would have to learn how. An electric bilge pump had been installed. Badly. In fact everything that had been done since she left Pacific Seacraft had been done badly. I could only be grateful so little had been done. The fool who installed the pump had been too lazy to do the job properly and instead of drilling a hole for the pipe in the fiberglass structure that the engine sits in he had pulled out a rubber bung that serves the purpose of preventing chafe and rammed



done from the safety of the cockpit. We made new sail ties, ordered new fenders, replaced bulbs, put a new battery in the clock, adjusted the barometer and polished the topsides. I cleaned all the portholes and we emptied her out and cleaned the cabin thoroughly. I teak oiled the interior and stripped and cleaned the toilet and pump. Benjy tuned the rig and made up a list of jobs for me to get done.

In a few days **CARAWAY** was looking like a new boat. The list of jobs to be done included treating the bowsprit which had been left to rot when the varnish had flaked away. We weren't sure the spruce had survived and plan to take it off and have a better look at a later date. Benjy plans to make me a new one with some spruce that came from the mast of a legendary Scottish Fyfe dismasted near St. Tropez. I like the idea that **CARAWAY** will have another piece of wonderful maritime history in her bones.

Her engine was badly neglected and despite engineers claims that it had been serviced and inspected regularly the water pump was leaking and had been for some time. Sea water had been dripping down the engine and causing corrosion. The pump would have to be repaired and the engine cleaned and repainted. Replacing the exhaust elbow had been done at the advice of Cellar Marine in Falmouth who are a ray of sunlight in the gloom of the British boat

the pipe into an existing hole alongside another hose. This hose carries sea water to the engine cooling system.

When the engine runs the pipe now rubs against the raw fibreglass and will eventually wear through. The result being water flooding into the boat and the engine overheating. This is typical of British boatyards. Not a care in the world for the boat or the safety of her owner. The only priority to save time and get the maximum financial return for the work. That is ultimately why I bought a Pacific Seacraft yacht. I will do most of the work on her myself or will get trusted friends or recommended engineers to do things for me and I will oversee what they do and be sure they do it right.

Who, after all will put their life at sea at the mercy of strangers, bodgers and cost cutters; those who will be comfortably seated at the bar while you are subjected to their incompetence, laziness and thoughtlessness at sea in a gale? Pacific Seacraft understand what going to sea is all about. They have built a deserved reputation for quality and workmanship in their product. I will inspect every inch of my boat before a voyage because I hate to leave anything to fate. Extraordinary things can happen at sea but I have a great deal more confidence setting sail with the knowledge that my boat was built by Pacific Seacraft. Thank you Bruce Bingham for designing my first and very special boat.



# Rendezvous in Barkley Sound



By Gary Kries

Three Flickas (**PASSAGES**, **KIRI** and **COCOA**) spent two to three weeks cruising in Barkley Sound on the west shore of Vancouver Island Canada.

**ABOVE**

Under full sail, **KIRI** in Barkley sound.

**UPPER RIGHT**

**PASSAGES** and **KIRI** at anchor on Effingham Island, Barkley Sound.

**MIDDLE**

**KIRI**, **COCOA**, and **PASSAGES** anchored in a star in Jaques Lagoon which has such a tight entrance that most boats won't attempt it. WE had the place to ourselves except for a few kayaks that passed through.

**BOTTOM**

Three Flickas in the morning fog of Turtle Bay, Barkley Sound, Canada.

Photos by Gary Kries







# The Lake Washington Ship Canal

*By Lee Crockett*

The **Punker Doodle's** summer home was a slip in Seattle's Northlake Marina in Lake Union. My wife Peg and I, along with our two boys took a trip to Seattle this summer to visit my two sisters, their kids, and to spend some time on the boat. It was a whirlwind tour that included the Snoqualmie Falls, Mount Rainier National Park, a dash down to visit friends in Portland, and much socializing with family. The result was we only had a couple of days to sail Puget Sound. The first step was to get from Lake Union to Puget Sound.

Lake Union is a relatively small lake situated between Lake Washington on the east and Seattle and Puget Sound on the west. There is a canal (or river) that connects Lake Washington to Lake Union and Lake Union to Puget Sound.

We had decided to do the trip on Monday instead of Saturday so we wouldn't have to deal with weekend boating traffic. From what I have read, the canal traffic on the weekends can be very heavy and very hectic.

On Monday morning we took a trip to West Marine to buy new batteries (the **Punker Doodle's** were due to be replaced) and to Trader Joe's to provision. We left the boys with my sister and their cousins and headed to the marina. It was mid afternoon by the time we got everything stowed, batteries installed, and the boat washed.

We talked with the Pacific Seacraft dealer who was located at our marina about passing through the canal and the locks. It was 3:00 pm by the time we were ready to go and headed out under power to get through the first bridge before the 4:00 pm bridge closing (they don't open between 4:00 and 6:00 pm). Moving from Lake Union to Puget Sound requires one to cross under four



**Motoring through the canal aboard s/y PUNKER DOODLE after clearing the Fremont Bridge.**

*Photo: Lee Crockett*



**Peg driving with two of the four bridges astern.**

*Photo: Lee Crockett*



# Aboard s/y PUNKER DOODLE



**Secured in the lock and waiting.**

*Photo: Lee Crockett*



**Next stop Puget Sound.**

*Photo: Lee Crockett*

bridges and pass through a set of locks. According to the chart and cruising guide the Freemont Street bridge was the only one that we couldn't clear with a mast height of around 32 feet. While we probably could have just made it since the mean high water clearance is 30 feet, we opted to be safe and go through the bridge opening procedure, which is quite interesting if you have never done it.

One long blast and one short blast on your air horn will alert the bridge tender that you want him to open the bridge. He will reply with a similar sequence to acknowledge that he knows you are there and will be opening the bridge for you. So as we motored toward the bridge I depressed the button on my air horn, which resulted in a short, yet loud squeak. Pushing the button again had the same result. (Time for a new air horn!) Fortunately the bridge tender understood that the first short squeak was supposed to be a long blast and responded by signaling that he would open the bridge span.

Imagine stopping traffic in both directions so your 20-foot pleasure boat can motor through. Passing under a draw-bridge for the first time is an interesting experience. As you look up you see several hundred tons of steel moving above you.

Once we had cleared the Freemont Bridge we could safely pass under the other three bridges since they each had mean high water clearances of at least 40 feet. The stretch of canal just past Lake Union is almost scenic with lots of green embankments and an almost park like setting. As you progress toward the locks the shore gets progressively more developed and commercial.

There are two locks situated side by side, a large one and a small one. On the weekends the lock attendant tells you which one to enter while on week-





# The Lake Washington Ship Canal

days you can pretty much take your pick. The small lock is by far the easiest because its sides are like floating docks which means as the water level raises or lowers, the lock walls raise or lower with it. In the large lock you must work your 50-foot dock lines and fend off from the wall.

Approaching the locks is like driving up to an intersection in your car. There is a stoplight. When the light is red you wait. When it turns green you can enter the lock. Once at the entrance to the lock itself, the attendant tells you where to go and what to do. These folks are very efficient and incredibly patient. In our passage they put five pleasure boats into the small lock.

We were the second boat in and once we had our lines secured we just sat and waited. This gave us a good opportunity to really look things over. I was surprised to see a fairly large group of spectators watching the process (it is a great feeling to be someone's entertainment). This also gave us a chance to chat up the boat next to us and the boat behind us. When they found out that this was our first trip through the locks they gave us a knowing look and probably figured out that they should give us plenty of time and room to maneuver.

Once all boats are positioned and secured, you start to descend 20 feet or so. When you reach the bottom all you can see are the lock walls. It was kind of like being in a metropolitan area with skyscrapers all around you. Then the gate or doors open in front of you and you are looking out at a short stretch of canal with Puget Sound beyond. As we motored out into Puget Sound for the first time the sunshine that was present throughout the canal disappeared behind a solid blanket of clouds. We motored with the mainsail up across to Bainbridge Island and our first anchorage.



**Typical Seattle weather.**

*Photo: Lee Crockett*



**Peg at our anchorage on Bainbridge Island with Seattle in the background.**

*Photo: Lee Crockett*

