

FC News

Editor: Ron Walton

No. 29

Winter 2007

Welcome to issue number 29 of the FC News.

Sadly I learned in December that Mary White had lost her boat, *Sapo* FC #10, along the Mosquito Coast of Honduras. Mary and her Grenadine cat *Bandera* were rescued by the crew of a Honduran shrimp boat and returned to the US just before Christmas. In a recent telephone conversation Mary told me that *Sapo* went aground in the Vivarillo Cays (off the northeast corner of Honduras) after an anchoring failure, and *Sapo* was then looted by local lobsterman who saw the beached boat as a shipwreck. Mary was lucky to save her laptop computer, a few clothes, and her cat; all that remained of *Sapo* was an empty hull. Mary had been out cruising for 15 years and had sailed singlehanded (except for cat crew) west from Mexico to the east coast of Central America via the Strait of Malaaca, the Cape of Good Hope, and Hurricane Ivan in Grenada. The e-mail I received from Mary in December is published below.

Also in this issue are letters from Val Engstrom, John Bowman, and Shemaya Laurel, owners of FCs 4*, 19, and 30, respectively. Val Engstrom explains how he named his Heritage Marine built FC the *Maynard G. Krebbs* and his dream to complete this boat which still sits in his back yard after more than 20 years. John Bowman brings us up to date on his FC and asks for some advice from the fleet about refinishing the exterior wood. And, Shemaya Laurel, with a lot of regret, has placed *New Salt*, FC #30, up for sale. Because of health problems Shemaya has been unable to sail her FC and thinks a tiny cruising boat may be in her future. She currently owns a 14 foot Peep Hen as well as *New Salt*.

Historical note. The Heritage Marine built FCs were called Nor'Sea 22s at the time they were built, but they are from the same plans and molds as the Sam Morse Co. Falmouth Cutters. Sam Morse acquired the plans and molds from Heritage Marine, began calling the boats Falmouth Cutters, and began numbering his FCs from one also. In the FC News Nor'Sea 22s are called Falmouth Cutters, but their hull numbers are followed by an asterisk. Further, two of the Heritage Marine boats claim to be hull number 7 and none claims hull number 6, so that's why my annual boat list contains FCs #7* and #7**.

Out here in the San Francisco Bay area, *el niño* has made this winter's weather drier than usual. So maybe I will get a sail in before winter departs. I hope you are all having similar thoughts and wish you all a happy and safe year of sailing in 2007.

Thank you.

Ron Walton
1671 Via Rancho
San Lorenzo, CA 94580
(510) 278-3335
rwsailor@mac.com

Maynard G. Krebbs, FC #4*

You asked about my boat. No, I haven't launched it. It is still sitting in my back yard, where it has sat for twenty-five years. Yes, I have named it the *Maynard G. Krebbs*. If you are an old fart you will remember who that was. At the time of the christening a lot of boats were being named for characters like "Lois Lane" and "John Wayne". So I gave it a beatnik name. I am kind of sorry I have let it sit for so long, but most of my energies are taken by the house and other interests. It is

starting to look like I should sell it, but I still can't think about that. Your dreams are hard to die, but you can ignore them or put them off. My wife is pushing for letting it go, but I think if my health gives me a chance I might be able to finish it. I am about 80% completed, just can't seem to get it done.

I now have an email address: vrengstrom@ca.rr.com. I hope to continue getting your newsletter.

I don't know if you remember that we met once at your boat in the Alameda Marina. I was visiting my friends Bob and Kathy Benoit. I worked at Heritage Marine with Bob on the Nor'sea 28. I retooled the 27' motorsailer they produced, but didn't sell many. I also worked on the tooling of the 22. Lyle Hess and another fellow (I don't remember his name) did most of the tooling themselves. We went on the maiden voyage together, half of us on a 28, the other half on the 22. Lyle was quite the character, and an excellent boat designer. He taught me to make a wooden plane, but got upset with me when I didn't finish it. I guess many of my projects don't get finished.

I enjoy reading about the boats, since I helped build some of them. My partner and I built three or four of them after Heritage Marine closed their doors. I remember John Ramos, but that's about the only name I remember. Most were just the basic plywood unfinished interiors that were trimmed out later.

Well that's enough reminiscing, especially since my memory isn't that good. Say hi to Bob if you see him.

Val Engstrom

Sapo, FC #10

Hi Ron, well.....I really do not want to tell you or anyone BUT I lost SAPO in the Vivarillo Cays. Hey, not such good news, huh? Not a long story really and not even a scary or dangerous one, just stupidity on my part. Anyway, I am on the island of Roatan, Honduras, living on a shrimping boat. Honduran people are incredibly NICE, generous, friendly, etc. etc. and rescuing a boatwrecked sailor is right up their line. And lots of them speak English; that makes everything a lot easier. I am struggling to solve all the problems about actually flying to California. It is cold there and I have NO warm clothes (okay, I admit it, I have one pair of shorts and 5 tee shirts. Period, dot.) and the CAT needs a carry-on luggage thing (not available on this island) and shots and papers. But sooner than I would like I will be back @home@so-called, freezing in Northern California Winter. Well, Ron, aren't you sorry you asked???

Mary White

No, I am not sorry I asked. I am just happy to know that you and Bandera are both okay. Welcome home.

Ron Walton

Elise, FC #19

The last I wrote I was in Georgia. I've since moved to Baltimore and I'm keeping Elise at the Baltimore Marine Center on the Patapsco. I'd be very interested in hearing from anyone in the area, as I'm still exploring and getting to know the bay.

I recently put a freehand windvane on Elise and it's worked out great. I checked the past newsletters for info about this windvane's use with FCs but couldn't find much. If anyone's faced the same issue and would like feedback, they're welcome to contact me. In short, I'd highly recommend it - it works very well.

My new address is 1002 S Clinton St, Baltimore MD 21224. A number where I can be reached is 410-276-2432. Regarding the vane, I did talk to Gary Felton - original owner of *Angelsea* - before I decided on installing one. It did have a freehand style vane on it at one time. No, they're not

cheap, but the simplicity of the design has been ideal for me.

Separately, I'm in the process of stripping all the old varnish off the outside woodwork. My intention is to revarnish in the spring, but I'm considering other options as well (oil finish, letting it go bare, etc.). I'd be curious to hear what you and others might recommend. Thoughts?

John Bowman / john.bowman1@verizon.net

Bare wood must be teak; oil needs to be reapplied frequently; varnish requires at least 9 coats. You might consider a varnish alternative such as Cetol Light. This is less colorful than the original Cetol and requires only 3 or 4 coats, without sanding in between! Also it reportedly can be removed easily with a heat gun if you don't like it, or when you need to strip it to start over. Epifanes also has a similar product, now sold in the US by West Marine with their name on the can. Jerry Kovach has used the latter on his FC #37 Walt Whitman.

Ron Walton

New Salt, FC #30

Well, it's pretty official -- I'm going ahead with listing *New Salt* with Rogue Wave. Kate seems quite nice, and it's a great relief to me to not have to go through all the ups and downs of actual conversations with interested individuals. The official listing should be out in January. What's your policy on putting a notice on your web site for boats that are being sold through brokers? The folks who read the FC News are exactly the sort that I'd like to see end up with the boat! (See Shemaya's ad for New Salt at: <http://homepage.mac.com/rwsailor> . Go down to the FCs for Sale button on that page and click on it. Note that Shemaya is listing New Salt with Rogue Wave Yachts so you should contact them and not her if you are interested in purchasing. -- Ed.)

Selling *New Salt* is quite sad, but I'm trying to focus on the outstanding times that I was blessed to have in that boat. I still think the FC is the finest boat out there for the kind of trips I took. It really was the very best fun. I am consoling myself with the prospect of a "glasshouse Chebacco" - a Phil Bolger design that was in the November/December (#42) issue of **Small Craft Advisor**. The design has great prospects for adaptation for cockpit/cabin access with no steps, and a raised berth that should work for sailing lying down with quite good visibility. I'm proceeding slowly with possibilities of getting one built -- with my Peep Hen in the meantime to keep my boat energies occupied...(The Peep Hen is 14 feet... with a surprising amount of cabin size for that length.)

A while back I did a lot of looking into tiny boats sailing across oceans -- but the survival statistics don't come out so good. A shocking number of folks who have set out have disappeared at sea, or had parts of their boats discovered later. In the comprehensive list of tiny boat expeditions, that I came across, it looked like about a third didn't survive, either their first voyage, or for some people, who did repeat voyages, their second or third. Ouch. So anyhow, my inclination to even think about going offshore in such a little boat has completely evaporated -- but coastal is nice! Though I will miss that "bombproof" feeling of the Falmouth cutter.

Thank you for putting out the nice issue of FC News -- it's always so interesting to read what's going on. Nice to see that *Second Look* got such a nice happy new home -- having so nearly come to New England! I missed an issue of FC News, until much later, when the fellow who owned *Second Look* speculated about why I ended up with *New Salt*. It wasn't the boat at all -- rather that we would have had to wait until May to look at it. I had this sense of driven urgency -- apparently not misplaced, considering how my health situation has gone -- and so when *New Salt* came to my attention, and was a good boat, I just went forward with that. And by May, *New Salt* had been trucked from Seattle and was in the water in Connecticut.

So anyway, there's some of the background on that -- I'm glad it's all worked out so nicely.

Shemaya Laurel