

DECEMBER 1987

## FALMOUTH CUTTER NEWSLETTER

I must admit, I've really been a dud as your NEWSLETTER writer these past months. After getting off letters in November 1986, and February 1987, I let my NEWSLETTER dedication slip badly. Hope all will forgive me! The tough economic times that have prevailed in Houston, for far too long now, sort of wore me down. A maxi effort from all concerned has been required to keep the ship and other prized assets afloat. Thankfully, we are still afloat, and with brighter hopes for the future, we plan to find more time to enjoy sailing Lyle and Sam's beautiful creation during 1988. (It will be ok with me if the economic times of 1986-87 never show up again! ). Enough of that -I'll try to do a better job of keeping the Falmouth Cutter gang informed in the future.

Fortunately, several of you have sent me letters and bits of information since the last NEWSLETTER. The following will provide an overview of the communications.

1. Bob Davey sailed from Galveston to Florida again in the Spring of 1987. This time he did it solo. (His first trip was with one crew that spent much of the time seasick on the cabin sole.) Bob called me to advise that he was bringing "Pony" to Houston from Dallas on his trailer to prepare everything for the cruise. Unfortunately, I was not able to meet with Bob during his brief Houston visit, and I have not received a report from him on his solo voyage. I just hope that all went well! I tried to phone him a couple of times, but without success. Bob, if you receive this NEWSLETTER, please give us a good report on your trip -share the adventure, ideas and suggestions you might have for cruising in a Falmouth in blue water. My son reads SAIL MAGAZINE and noted an ad offering "Pony" For Sale. Hope economic times in Dallas are not bringing this about for you Bob, and that you will be able to keep feeding the sailing, cruising dream you expressed so well in your poem "Bearing Away" shared with all in the November 1986 NEWSLETTER. Do you still have "Pony"? What are your plans for 1988? A good report on your Florida trip will be welcomed by all!

2. Manfred Willasch (Libertad - Nor'Sea 22) provided the following report in May 1987 from his home in Seattle, Washington.

"We attended the Bristol Channel/Falmouth Cutter meet in Port Townsend on April 25-26, 1987. Due to head winds, had to motor from Everett, Washington, (my home port) to Port Townsend which took us approximately eight hours (ugh! ). but with a joyful sail back. It was a beautiful weekend with blue skies, very unusual for this area. Six Bristol Channel Cutters and two Falmouth Cutters attended. There was a sail-together on Saturday afternoon with a pot luck function in the evening. It was a great turn-out, hopefully to be repeated in the near future.

This past week, I spent a week's vacation in Southern California and naturally, I

visited Sam Morse's Boat Yard. Unfortunately, Sam was out of town, but I had a delightful conversation with his foreman Dick. Sam was in the process of building three BCC's and one Falmouth. At the point of my visit, the Falmouth was a bare hull. Materials used and the workmanship of Sam's yard are definitely superior!

In your previous letter, you mentioned having problems with your varnish. I use Decks Ole # 1 on the interior of my boat and topside, I use a high gloss varnish. (Manfred didn't say what make varnish). "I have found that the exterior varnish holds up well, but I cheat since I use a canvas boat cover most of the year, which covers the entire boat from boomkin to bowroller. This has proven to be a wise investment saving me a lot of work during Spring maintenance.

Thanks Manfred for keeping us posted. I've never sailed your area, but I hear that once you have, you come away feeling, like the beer commercial, " It doesn't get any better than this". Keep us posted on your cruisin' and BCC/Falmouth get together.

3. In June 1987, I received a thoughtful letter from Henning Christiansen, proud owner of Falmouth hull # 25. Henning is a Violin Maker, Dealer, Restorer, Appraiser, and maker of Fine Gifts. -Sounds to me like a master craftsman is going to make sweet music finishing out the hull purchased from Sam earlier in the year. Henning says, "We have been wanting to write for sometime to express appreciation to you for taking up the task of preparing the Falmouth Cutter Newsletter.. (Ugh! Sorry I've done so poorly)." Our reason for not doing so earlier is that we have moved from Chicago to Saugatuck, Michigan. Saugatuck is a small town on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, and is often referred to as the Cape Cod of the Midwest. Also, Michigan and the North Channel offers some of the finest cruising country in the world.

By way of introduction, we purchased a Falmouth Cutter Hull #25 from Sam and I'm finishing the boat myself. However, due to moving both a home and business location, we have had to delay the boat building business until things are under control. In the meantime, we go to the work shed and cry a lot, longing for the day we can again pick up where we left off. This is our seventh boat -either newly built or refurbished over a twenty year period.

Ya know, the folks that are attracted to Lyle and Sam's boats are really neat! Henning, I hope that as 1987 moved on, you found the time you need to get back to finishing your boat. I hope you will share the challenge of finishing a Falmouth interior with us. I'm sure all will be interested in the new ideas you have decided to build into your boat. They say that anyone who can build a boat well, can just about build anything. When you take a guy who builds beautiful violins and get him fired up finishing a boat he loves- the results have got to be very special. I know how busy you must be, but I do hope you find a little time on a quiet evening to jot us a report on your progress; tell us the name you have selected for your boat, and share with us the Midwest Cape Cod cruising you plan to do when she is complete

and awaiting the kiss of the wind in her sails. If you'll write, I promise to get the news out to the gang without too much delay!

4. Sam Morse sent me a brief note suggesting that I advise the Falmouth owners that, "If, in the unlikely event someone wished to sell his Falmouth, he might let me know, as we sometimes know of a prospect." -If you should need or desire to sell your boat, let Sam know, perhaps he can be of help.

5. In the note from Sam, he enclosed a letter from the venturesome sailor, and now former Falmouth owner, Steve Willingham of Juneau, Alaska. Steve tells the story far better than I can, so here it is. .."Thanks Rex, for the recent NEWSLETTER. Any mail that makes it this far helps to keep the snow out of the P. O. Box. - A bit of serendipity has come to pass over the winter, and I wanted to bring you and Sam up to date. Out of the blue, back in October, I got a note from Ennis Elliott & Becky Sanders inquiring if "Anodyne" (# 21) were for sale. As it turned out, with a recent addition to our crew, I had decided to look for something just a scotch bigger. Becky and Ennis were keen on the F/C and we came to a mutual settlement. There were alot of coincidences in the whole arrangement - too many to be overlooked. One of the more interesting is that the boat I am now buying is a Vertue, the same boat Becky said they were going to buy if the F/C hadn't come through....small world! Right now, "Anodyne" is in Alameda, California and my new boat "Exody" is a-building in Oxford England. It looks like a good excuse to cruise to Scotland this summer!

Well, I guess I have moved on to that class of folks -"former Falmouth Cutter owner" -a small group to be sure, but one secure in the knowledge that they have sailed one of the grand little ships of the world and dealt with one classy gentleman in Sam Morse. -Thanks - Stay upwind -Steve."

Gosh Steve, I've never met you, but I'll miss ya just the same. I'm sure all join me in wishing you well with your new Vertue - The great sailor Hal Roth, and many others, e.g. (Dr. David Lewis) speak so very well of the Vertue, I'm sure you'll enjoy her. I think I can speak for the FC gang when I say, please do us all one last favor, tell us the story of picking up your boat in England and hopefully the cruise of Scotland. Do you plan to sail her across "the pond" and back to your home in Alaska? ..Or will she ride to America on a big ship? If you want to continue the NEWSLETTER for awhile, let me know, and I'll keep you up to date with the old gang. If you want to write to Steve, his address is 1635 Harbor Way, Juneau, Alaska 99807.

6. Regarding hard dinghies, perhaps you all know this, but in the event you don't -I received a brief note from Lyle Hess regarding a hard dinghy for my FC "Seabird". Lyle states, "The 7' Fatty Knees', will fit very well on the top of your house, as will the Montgomery 6'8".” Lyle advised that the Fatty Knees' 7', 8' and 9' are being built by Grace Marine Corp. 200 Corporate Place, Suite 7, Peabody, MA. 01960, c/o Joe and Libby Nye. In a note from Mr. Nye, I was advised that some FC owner

has ordered the 8' dinghy for his boat with a special cut-out in the transom to allow easier entry to the cabin. If the 8' dinghy owner gets this NEWSLETTER, please drop us a line and tell us how the 8' dinghy works out. Would it be better to stay with the 7' model? ...or is the 8' OK? While at anchor at Redfish Island on Galveston Bay many months ago, I saw the Fatty Knees' 7' sail by smartly with two adults aboard. Looked like they were having fun and had enough room to stay afloat. Sailing really small boats is great fun. When I get some "freedom chips" .I plan to add a 7' to my cabin top. Do any of you have personal experience with a Fatty Knees' to share with the Group?

7. From Roadtown, British Virgin Islands we have a letter from Gary and Jeanne Felton (Angelsea # 19). Gary and Jeanne write, "Right now, Jeanne and I are down here in the Virgin Islands skippering a Gulfstar 60' for The Moorings, so as to build up a cruising kitty. Talk about culture shock, going back to a 22 footer, but we'll love it! It's a butt buster sailing and maintaining a large yacht, the Falmouth will allow us to enjoy sailing again.

Our plans are to return to Southern California in June 1987, drop Angelsea back in the water and cruise the Channel Islands until November when we will head south to Taco land. From there, we plan to head towards Tahiti and eventually points South and West from there.

As far as weather helm goes on the Falmouth, it may not be actual weather helm. It is an idea I came up with, but didn't have the time to check out before we left for the "Caribe". The problem may be rudder float. The rudder is extremely bouyant, when you heel over, the rudder wants to float up, giving the feel of weather helm. One way to check is to actually measure the angle the rudder makes to the centerline while sailing. It should be no more than 3 to 5 degrees, if its within this range, then thats good, and what you feel is the bouyancy of the rudder. Lyle told me, with emphasis, once that another culprit can be hook in your main leech. My Skip Elliott sail is very bad in this regard and will need recut or replacement."

Thanks Gary for your interesting ideas and suggestions. I'm sorry to say, that I no longer have an active address for Gary and Jeanne. If anyone knows how to "stay in touch" with them as they cruise, please drop me their address and I'll forward our NEWSLETTER efforts on to them, and will ask that they share their adventure with all of us and especially the weekend sailors like myself.

8. The following came our way from Lewis and Marcia Lyons, of Riverside, California, owner of FC # 7 "Aurora". Lew writes, "As was noted in the last FC NEWSLETTER, the FC's were invited to participate in the BCC race and beach party at Dana Point, Calif. June 13, 1987. For a variety of reasons, only one FC was able to make the race, and that was "Aurora" .The race was to be from the breakwater at Newport Beach to R "2" bouy off Dana Point which would make it an eleven mile race. A skippers meeting was held Saturday morning at the raft-up in Newport harbor aboard Steve Kaufman's BCC; "Viajero". As Aurora was the only

FC in the race, she was to be allowed 40 seconds a mile. It wasn't a unanimous decision, and the BCC guys agonized over it for awhile. We further agreed, since there was no committee boat, to proceed in a line 90 degrees to the race course and at a signal turn to the race course heading. Not exactly America's Cup stuff, but it turns out to work. In any case, we then proceeded out Newport Harbor past the jetty in a rough line 90 degrees to the race course. At a signal from Steve Kaufman, we turned and the race was on!

There were seven BCC's and Aurora. The wind was from the WNW at 8-12 knots, making the course a broad reach. Three of the BCC's along with Aurora popped their spinnakers, (cruising spinnakers), and went boiling off. It so happens, and I guess it shouldn't be a surprise, an FC with cruising spinnaker is equal to or better than a BCC without one. It turned out to be a beautiful day after an overcast morning, and it was a great two and a half hour sail to Dana Point.

With no committee boat, everyone took their own time, and this proved to be a bit shaky. However, boat for boat, two BCC's were clearly ahead. Steve Kaufman edged out Aurora by a whisker pole and he didn't have a spinnaker...the rest of the BCC's ate FC dust. Once on shore, we lorded it over the BCC's - David and Goliath once again! All was done in good spirit, and everyone agreed the race was fun as was the get together on the beach that afternoon. There were a lot of folks at the beach party that could not race, so we had a nice crowd. Sam and Betty Morse were there holding down the picnic tables when we got to the beach and the party really got underway. FC owners Ross and Brenda Bell were able to get down for the party and Ross said he plans to make the next race. All in all, it was another great day on the water in Southern California.

Thanks Lew for the race report. The mighty BCC is really something to go up against. You did very well in deed! Here on Galveston Bay in a 15-20 knot blow I tried to stay with John Pogue's BCC several years ago. I was just learning to sail the FC and didn't do too well, but would relish another chance to take on the Goliath again. I hope your BCC and FC gatherings and racing activity will continue and grow. We are all interested, so please keep us advised.

Well, that's all the news that has come in from you guys since the February 87 NEWSLETTER. Feed me with some more fuel and I'll crank out the info for all to enjoy.

Before closing, let me tell you about something Jeannine and I did to make "Seabird" more enjoyable to cruise on. With the solid fiberglass forward hatch closed, the forward cabin is, to quote Jeannine, "dark as the hold of Calcutta" – whatever that means...but dark it was. I considered putting in a couple of deck prisms, but decided against it. Following the terrific hurricane that hit Galveston Bay hard in 1983, I went out a couple of days after the great blast to survey the smashed yachts, homes, everything. Standing on the shore, I noticed a lot of wood beating up against some rocks. I climbed down to the water's edge and found some

choice pieces of teak floating about. For several hours I watched as the wood floated in and picked up a few good pieces of the bashed dreams of what once were some beautiful boats. To make a long story short, I decided to make a solid 3/4" teak hatch for "Seabird" from the better pieces of salvaged teak. Using the fiberglass hatch as a pattern, we made a hatch with just a tad more height to add an inch or two more below deck. I purchased some clear 3/8" Lexan plastic to let in the light. We put a two inch by two inch teak strong back down the center of the new hatch to support the just about bullet proof Lexan - what a difference! Come nap time, I look up to see the clouds and sky, stars fair weather and foul, hatch open or shut. I wish our wood workmanship could match that of Sam's talented group, but we gave it our best shot. Any regrets, perhaps one. If starting the project again, I think I would slant the hatch higher aft to drain water forward rather than create the approximate 1/2" curve in the Lexan to run water off port and starboard. I feel the slant aft might add to the lovely Nor'Sea Cutter lines Lyle drew so beautifully. Frankly, I was afraid to do anything for fear of gumming up the lines, but the light below is well worth it for Jeannine and I. Sometime I'll take a picture of Seabird and see if it will reproduce well enough for you to see what we did.

I'm sure you all have great ideas and things you have done or plan to do to make your FC more of a personal home on the water. The FC NEWSLETTER is the perfect place to share you thoughts and ask questions. Do it!

Parting report - Fearless sailor Jim Baker, "Bosun" FC # 10 called me from Engleside, Texas (Corpus Christi Bay) some months ago. He had sailed Bosun to Mexico after his return trip to the Seattle area from Hawaii. Having gone through the Panama Canal and across the Gulf of Mexico in Texas heat, Jim sounded tired when he called for a brief visit. He asked if I knew of anyone who had a trailer to carry his FC. I told him that Bob Davey of Dallas had one, and suggested he give him a call to see if something could be worked out for him to get his boat back to the Seattle area via highway. I haven't heard if they made an accommodation on this matter. Hope this NEWSLETTER effort will bring us up to speed on Jim's location and the status of Bob Davey and "Pony"

Got to run now. I hope all of you will enjoy the Holiday Season, your families, your boats, your life! Its a time to be thankful for so many things. I am, and I hope you guys are too. - May the Spirit of Christmas be with you throughout the holidays, and may the New Year bring you good health, happiness and success in your worthy efforts. Smooth sailin'.....

Please send your FALMOUTH CUTTER NEWS to:

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