



The Nor'Sea27 Owners NewsLine

The Newsletter of Inspired Nor'Sea 27 boat owners.

Issue # 20

Jan., Feb., Mar. 2000

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!

We hope you enjoy this issue of the NewsLine! It's one to sit back and read in front of the fireplace and DREAM of the cruising life!

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BEEN THERE, DONE THAT!

Owners Report

A Nor'Sea goes to Cuba

Clyde & Loretta

Part 2

A Note from Clyde regarding part 1:

Regarding the trip to Nicaragua, I made a comment about being the only non born-again Christian on board. It wasn't, and isn't, my intent to disparage any of my fellow sailors. These were really nice people. I'm afraid some readers might be offended. I would like to apologize to anybody who was offended by my comments.

Thanks,
Clyde

Now on to the story.....

As we were checking out of Hemingway, the Guarda (their Coast Guard) wanted another “souvenir”. We reminded them that we had already donated to their cause. They just smiled. We had to give a list of all the places we wanted to visit. Out of about a dozen places, he scratched half of them. Wouldn't tell us why, just said we couldn't go there. By the time we left, we had our itinerary planned for us. It's the Cuban was of keeping track of the boats. To the best of my knowledge, the “land” cruisers aren't controlled this way. But, then, I guess they can't haul Cubans off the island in their cars. So, we did finally leave Hemingway with two other US sailboats. About halfway to Bahia Honda, we did hear some “boom-booms”. The military was firing blanks (I hope). One of the other boats got on the radio and hollered, “We're being fired on!”. We all laughed a kind of nervous laugh.

But, the Guarda does keep close track of the boats. We were contacted by radio and told that we were too close to one of the bays and had to be at least three miles offshore. I checked the charts and GPS and, sure enough, we were 2.8 miles from shore. After the “boom-booms”, we all moved about another half mile offshore.

Upon our arrival in Bahia Honda, we were greeted with yet another afternoon thundershower. Seeing lightening from the relative safety of shore is one thing. Trying to dodge the cloud-to-water lightening bolts while sailing with a 41 foot lightening rod is like playing chicken with the Fates. Even though it can be quite scary at times, it is very beautiful. Needless to say, we arrived safely. We grabbed a mooring buoy in front of the Guarda and he rowed out to greet us. The Guarda in Hemingway were dressed well and had relatively modern equipment. But, here, and the rest of Cuba that we visited, the Guarda were both poorly dressed and equipped. However, they were much nicer than in Hemingway. And nobody ever asked us for “souvenirs”. We even had trouble giving things away. This particular Guarda had to row an old wooden boat to Sandpiper. He didn't even have oarlocks, but instead, had rope tied around the oar and that was looped over a stick located where the oarlock should have been. This was standard equipment everywhere else we visited. The check-in was very quick and easy. When we offered him a drink, he declined. Loretta made up a little care package for him and his wife and we damn near had to force him to take it. How could he not give his wife a bottle of fingernail polish?

Bahia Honda looked like a tanker graveyard. A hurricane must have made a direct hit there years ago because the shore is littered with rusted hulls. There are even a couple lying upside down in the middle of the bay. We took the dinghy for a ride around the bay, which is several miles by several miles. About halfway across the bay, the Guarda stopped us and told us we couldn't take the dinghy to town. We would have to go to the dock and take a \$20 taxi to town. We decided to pass. On the way back to the boat, we were intercepted by two fishermen—waving lobsters (discreetly). We moseyed over, of course. They offered us three lobsters for \$3, the going rate. After the clandestine meeting we slipped them a couple of Loretta's care packages. As we were leaving, they called us back. This time they gave us a half a dozen mangos, which we suspect was their lunch. This was typical of our experience in Cuba. If we gave someone a gift, they would give us something. Needless to say, we had an excellent dinner and dessert that night.

The sail to Cayo Levisa was pretty mellow. As usual, the late afternoon thundershowers were threatening. We had gotten complacent because even though it would rain and thunder and lightening, there was never any wind. Well, never say never, right! Luckily, we had furled the headsail. The sky became it's usual gray. The huge thunderheads came rolling over us. Lightening streaked in the distance. Thunder roared across the bay. Loretta was steering. Then the wind hti! It hit so fiercely that she didn't have the strength to both hold the tiller and release the mainsheet. Sandpiper instantly dug her rails into the water. Water rushed into the cockpit. I had to jump over Loretta to release the mainsheet. The main was slammed into the spreaders. We were luffing as much as possible and still doing over 7 knots! Then, everything, around us disappeared. Visibility was maybe 50 feet. Cayo Levisa, the mountains, everything, was gone. It was a white out. I quickly checked the GPS and replotted our position. We had been sailing just outside the reefs, so we turned north for a while. The wind was still howling. Finally, we decided to heave-to. All of a sudden, everything became quiet and calm. We sat there, slowly drifting to leeward and away

from the reefs, for about 45 minutes. As quickly as the storm came, it ended. The sky was a deep blue, the mountains were clear and green, water was breaking over the reefs, the white sand beaches of Cayo Levisa were dazzling, and we were only a few miles off course. By now though, we were in full foul weather gear. And looking pretty stupid! We were later informed the Cayo Levisa recorded winds over 35 knots. And they're sheltered. We must have been in 45-50 knot range!! We were never complacent again.

It was getting late by the time we anchored in Cayo Levisa. The Guarda rowed out in his broken fiberglass boat. This one was much younger than the other Guarda, maybe mid-twenties. Camillo was very polite, he even took his boots off before going below. Like all the government officials in Cuba, his paperwork was done in at least duplicate, but nobody had NCR forms. Cuba must be the last major market in the world for carbon paper. However, even the carbon paper looked pretty worn. Camillo, with his broken English, and I, with my even worse Spanish, managed to have a semi-decent conversation. He told us that the employees work 5 to 7 days on the island, where they live in what appears to be a commune or dorm. Then, depending on their job, they go home for 2 or 3 days. They're actually screened by the government. Camillo lived in Pinar del Rio, up in the mountains. Others lived in Puerto Esperanza, our next stop.

We were anchored on the south side of the island, surrounded by mangroves. Pasa Tortugas, or Turtle Pass, was between us and the mainland, almost a mile away. In the background were the mountains. After spending so much time in Florida, with it's never-ending flatness, the view was truly awesome. In addition, since there were virtually no lights at night, we had an exquisite view of the Milky Way and saw dozens of shooting stars. This is part of the cruising life that is so very difficult to explain to people who have never experienced it. I don't have the ability to put this much beauty and serenity into words. I can't count all the times I've almost been in tears just looking at the water or the sunset or sunrise or the night sky or watching the dolphins or whales. It's truly Mother Nature, or God, at its finest.

But I digress. The next morning, we took the dinghy to the dock. By Cuban, and even some US standards, the dock wasn't too bad. A few broken and missing boards, no cleats, a real splinter trap, but, at least it was solid. We followed the dock over the water, through the mangroves, and shortly were greeted by the local welcoming committee. (Hundreds of mosquitoes, dozens of little crabs, half a dozen chickens and a cocky rooster). After donating a little blood, we headed for the palapa-style bar, where we chugged a mojito, the national drink. This butt-kicker consists of sugar, lime juice, rum, fresh mint, and more rum. Very refreshing, and just one of many we would imbibe in the next two weeks. The resort itself, consisted of a bar, restaurant, gift shop dive shop, and 20 cabins. Rates in the off-season were \$45. Quite reasonable. The beach and water were the main attractions, though. Three or four miles of gorgeous white sand beaches and turquoise water. And, virtually no people. Loretta and both knew instantly that this was the place we were looking for. The fact that the Cubans who worked there were extremely friendly, made it even better.

Over the next week or so, we would dinghy to the island, sit and read on the beach, talk to the tourists, swim, snorkel, walk along the beach, collect shells, and hang out with the Cubans. Every evening, before returning to the boat, we would stop by the bar and pick up our free bag of ice. Well, not exactly free. We had to provide the bag and we'd usually tip them a pack of gum. Since it was difficult to get, they really enjoyed the gum. Then, we could have our sundowner on Sandpiper. Our sundowners in Cuba were usually rum and fruit juice. We'd usually take our "Sun Shower" showers while toasting another great day. Dinner was generally some kind of pasta or rice.

While in Cayo Levisa, we met a family from St Pete on their powerboat :mojito:. Jerry and I went scuba diving one day. It was absolutely awesome!! For all I knew, we were the first people there. There were no signs that anyone had ever been there before. No beer bottles, broken fans, dead coral, etc. On the way back, we met some local fishermen and ended up with seven lobsters. The tails averaged about weight inches each. We had a great meal. Even with four adults and two kids we couldn't begin to eat all that lobster. So Loretta and I forced ourselves to eat two for breakfast the next morning. Then we went back and got six more. I wonder if you can overdose on lobster?

We were supposed to meet the fishermen again in a few days, but they never showed. On the way back to the boat, we met a bunch of other fishermen waiting for dark to start fishing. They didn't have any lobster, but we gave them the two cold beers we were going to give the other fishermen. The next day, we were given six lobsters. That's the Cuban people. No wonder we loved them so much.

One of the Cubans we befriended was a man named Pedro. We gave him one of Loretta's large care packages, which included clothes, food, cosmetics, candy, and whatever else she could cram into a plastic bag. He got very excited when we told him that our next stop was Puerto Esperanza, because that's where he lives. We would also be there on his days off. So Pedro insisted that we be his guests.

Our sail to Puerto Esperanza (PE) was fun. We actually sailed the entire way. Perfect wind! Cruising along at five to six knots with "Monica", our Monitor windvane, steering. PE is a typical Cuban fishing village, as opposed to a tourist town. With about 2000 people, it is a little larger than most. But, it still had the Guarda. This time we were boarded by two very young men, one being only 17. Once again, they were very friendly and polite, and wouldn't accept any "souvenirs". The Guarda gave us a list of rules, including: we had to take our dinghy to their dock, we had to be aboard our boat between 9pm and 7am, they could search us at anytime, and at night we had to have a "well-heeled" light on. I think someone grabbed a Spanish-English dictionary and looked up the word "prominent" and saw "well-heeled". These type of translation errors were quite common. In addition, the Guarda only had one wrinkled copy of the rules, so we had to read it and give it back. But, we had absolutely no trouble with the Guarda. One night we got back late and another day we left early. We were only searched the first time we went to shore. Once, when we were bringing a ton of gifts for our friends, we surprised the Guarda. We had been watching them dig a huge hole for several days. This particular day, as we walked around the corner, a bunch of them were bathing in the hole. They became very embarrassed when they saw Loretta. Luckily, everyone just had a good laugh. After that, they were very friendly.

See part 3 next issue!

**BEEN THERE, DONE THAT!
Owners Report**

**Freya's Frolicking Adventures
By Doug & Jennifer
on S/V Freya**

Hello Nor'Sea owners,

My husband Doug and I left to go cruising about 3 years ago. We have sailed up and down Alaska's inside passage, down the pacific west coast, Mexico, across the pacific, and from the Marquesas to Tonga. At this writing we are currently waiting for a weather window to cross to New Zealand.

We don't have e-mail on our boat, but go to internet places when we can.

**Stuck in Tonga,
Jennifer on S/V Freya Nor'Sea #87
South Pacific Serenade
(Mexico to Tahiti)**

Sometimes it is hard to believe we are on this side of the planet, but then I remember the 29 days of sailing and it all

makes sense. One hand on the onion, the other hand on the knife, one hand to hold on, oops there goes the onion. It only took a few days to get the rhythm: chop, roll, hold on, roll, chop, chop, roll, hold on.... Life at sea on a small boat is like time standing still. A whole month, just gone, well, spent sailing 2,800 Knotical miles from Puerto Vallarta Mexico, across the Pacific to the Marquesas Islands of French Polynesia.

Freya's last few days in Mexico where spent provisioning: cleaning, and storing away all our goodies from Mexico. Half the floor in the main Cabin was covered with bottles of water and a crate of oranges. All cupboards were bursting their doors and Freya's water line was, well, one could not see it to clearly however, Freya was ready when she sailed off her anchor and into the vast Pacific.

The first 500 miles were spent getting use to the motion of the sail and adjusting to night watches: Sunset 4 on - 4 off- 3 on -3 off sunrise. The first squalls didn't appear until the Inter Tropical Convergence Zone. This is the Pacific doldrums. Freya had little wind so the Yanmar was fired up and yet Freya only made 203 knots. The next day we hove to or "parked" in the middle of the Pacific. Doug jumped in to look at the hull. "Jenn you better get in here quick." Frey's entire bottom side was covered in 3 cm long striped gooseneck barnacles. With a rope in one hand and a spatula in the other we scraped away all the little uggers. It was a little scary jumping in the water. One can see forever yet there is nothing to see, just clear, ocean blue. The job took an hour and Freya was again underway and moving 1.5 knots faster.

We became shellbacks, even Freya, on April 25 as we crossed the equator at 8 am on Day 20 of our passage. Champagne and See's Bridge Mix were consumed and offered to the Great Neptune. The number of squalls increased. A black cloud would drift over Freya and release wind and rain. Several gallons of water were collected and allotted for showers and laundry. A few squalls carried lightning, but only sheet lightning and remained up in the clouds.

On day 29, at 7:30am, land was sighted and Freya sailed into Atuona Bay, Hiva Oa, of the Marquesas Islands, oh, to see other colors besides the shades of blue. To smell the sweet land, like citrus, to see and talk to other people! We sailed 2,800 miles without mishap, all on a beautiful, little, white and yellow sailboat.

The rumors about the South Sea Islanders are true. The people are beautiful, friendly, and all wear a bright red flower tucked behind an ear. The Marquesas have small villages with a few stores, a bank, and post office. Everyone was helpful and kind. The anchorage was crowded, but with a fresh water shower and a stone bench for doing laundry, everyone was happy.

Landfall not only meant land, freshwater and new food, it meant seeing old friends: Illusion, Endless Summer, Ustuper, and making new ones, Keith And Maria on s/v Lamala greeted us on our first day. They also have a small boat and knew about us through mutual friends. We spent several days exploring, hiking, foraging for fruit and sharing meals. One hike took us to a Mountain top overlooking the anchorage. While on the return hike we found ourselves in an old Mango Grove. All but one tree had lost its fruit, so we scurried around collecting as many mangos as we could, before they all rotted. We feasted on mango margaritas, mangos and cream, mango pancakes, mango chutney, and of course plain juicy mangos. We also foraged for lemons, papaya, pampellmoose (like a grapefruit, but better), bananas, breadfruit, avocados (they're huge here), oranges, plantains, and of course coconuts. Another hike lead us to a boulder covered in petroglyphs. The best part of the hike was walking through a jungle of colorful flowers, wild basil, tomatoes, ginger and over grown coconut groves. We also visited Paul Gougin's grave and house.

A local, named Roger, and some cruisers put together a Kei Kei (Marqusian Feast) for us in the anchorage. A pit was dug and when the fire inside had turned to red hot coals, it was layered with bananas leaves. Next, the pork, goat, yams, and coconut bread were placed in the pit and covered with more leaves, then dirt was thrown on top. The food cooked for several hours meanwhile Poisson Cruz (raw tuna in coconut milk) was prepared along with

pompellmousse juice, a pumpkin dish and octopus. The tale was decorated with palm fronds and stocks of bananas. Every thing was delicious and it seemed that half the food was cooked in a coconut milk base. Three men played ukuleles and sang while we ate. It was a delightful Marquesas experience. Although we enjoyed Atuona, it is a terribly expensive place, so we sailed off for a more remote anchorage.

The island of Tahuatu has no major rivers so the snorkeling is great. The rivers silt up the bays and make the water murky and with little visibility. Our anchorage had clear blue water spotted with coral and a white sand, palm tree lined beach. Snorkeling was like diving in a Sea World aquarium with Surgeon, parrot, angel, and moorish idol fish were every where, along with octopus hiding amongst the rocks. Doug caught a total of 2 octopus and 4 lobster during our stay. We are eating as well as we did in Alaska. Before leaving Ta huatu we visited the village Vaitahu. We met a nice family and traded some perfume, rubber balls, and embroidery floss for 2 large bags of fruit. The villages are always beautiful and sprouting all kinds of manicured, tropical, plants and fruit trees in every yard.

Once again we were on the move. After an overnight sail we spotted the island of Ua Pau. As we approached the coast we noticed strange appendage-like rock formations along the water's edge. The rugged coastline parted and Ha ka Hau Bay appeared. It's a small harbor with a village that extends down to the beach and back into the valley. A group of mountains rose out of the valley and when the clouds parted 3 rock pillars took over the sky line. We nestled in the anchorage, explored the village and decided to stay a few days.

During our 2nd night at anchorage the wind picked up and a 50 knot squall blew through the anchorage. The rain came down so hard it hurt my skin. One boat dragged down on 2 others which caused a 16.5 meter boat to drag down on one side of Freya. Meanwhile a 10 meter boat dragged down on the other side of Freya. Doug was setting a second anchor and I was running from side to side fending off the boats. Fortunately there was no serious damage to anyone nor any boat. Everyone was clam and helpful. Freya neither moved a centimeter nor had any damage.

A group of us attended a Mother's Day celebration and Solange, a local woman, made flower leis for the women. They were so fragrant the aroma lasted much longer than the flowers. We saw traditional Tahitian dance, by the Young women and the "Mothers" performed a dance. Both groups wore colorful costumes and moved in seductive ways. A delight to watch. We met another Marquesian, Dominique. We traded rope and fish hooks for fruit. When Doug asked how to prepare the breadfruit, Dominique said, just come over for dinner and I'll show you. The breadfruit is placed in an open fire until the outside is burnt. Once peeled, it can either be eaten right away or pounded and kneaded with water into a dough-like consistency. It was then soaked in coconut milk. We also ate pork and taro, and shark meat marinated in lemon, onions, garlic and coconut milk. Everything was delicious, but just the treat of dinning in a Marquesas home was the best. Ua Pou was very difficult to leave, but time on our Visas was running out.

Our day sail to the island of Nuka Hira was ideal. A beautiful beam reach in 15 knots of wind and light swell. We sailed into the entrance and were surrounded by jagged cliffs reaching toward the sky. The narrow entrance opened into a wide bay where we set our hook and spent a quiet night. The next morning we met Daniel and Antoinette. This couple has lived in the bay and greeted cruisers for over 20 years. We enjoyed chatting with them, picking fruit and signing their cruiser famous log book..

The next day we met the guys from Endless Summer on the beach and planned to hike to the base of Vaipo Falls. We began our walk along the beach, but the path soon lead into the jungle, where we saw ancient Polynesian ruins. The Royal Road is laid out in stone and stretches for several kilometers. We also saw piepies (stone foundations built high off the ground,) stone lined Pits used for storing food and trapping wild pigs (still used today) and two 1.5 meter high stone tikis. Further on we had to forge a couple swift, thigh deep rivers. As we approached the end of the trail, the valley's walls became narrower and narrower until they seemed to close over head. Where the rock walls met, water came tumbling down into a freshwater pool. Vaipo Falls is reported as the world's 2nd largest water fall. We swam

in the cool, fresh water and climbed under some boulders to reach the inner pool, Due to the amount and force of the water coming down, we had to yell to be heard and donned snorkel masks to see. One swift dive and we swam under the falls and to the back side. Perched on the stone wall we looked out through the cascading water. It was a great way to spend our last day in the Marquesas.

As we sailed away, I threw my flower lei into the water and said a little thank you to the island and their people. A few moments later, a school of dolphins, with a baby dolphin, swam by to bid us farewell. As the Marquesas Islands grew smaller, we looked back with fond memories and ahead to more exciting adventures. We were off to the Tuamotu Archipelago – The Dangerous Archipelago.

On the third sunrise of our passage, we could barely see the atoll, just a gray haze on the horizon. The low profile of the atolls has always been a hazard to ships, even those with radar. As we sailed closer we could make out a shape, then some green. The atolls are so flat that the tallest object is a palm tree.

An atoll is formed when a mountain rises up through the sea and breaks the water's surface. Coral begins to grow around the edges and when the mountain settles back into the water, the coral reef remains and a lagoon is formed. Motus are islets that are scattered about the reef. Often a pass is formed. This is the only major break in the reef and the only way for large amounts of sea water to move in and out of the lagoon. Thus, large currents of water and sea life sweep in and out of the pass, making navigation difficult for small, slow sailboats. However, we navigated through Tiareoa pass without mishap and a little 1.5 knot push.

Our friends on Tamala were volunteering at on of the local Black Pearl farms. They had become one of the family and in typical Tahitian manner, the family practically adopted us and several other cruisers too. We were to snorkel and spear fish on the outer reef. The skiff ride to the outside of the atoll, alone, was worth the trip. Pounding through the waves in an aluminum boat at 20 kilometers an hour and getting completely soaked, but who cares, its warm. With the anchor down, we scrambled over the side and into the clear blue water. Almost everyone had spear guns and immediately began looking for dinner. Moana, whose name means deep ocean, can stay underwater for 4 minutes, freediving. He is so graceful. It was here, on the outer reef that I saw my first shark, and the second, third, forth..... All of them were small, about 1 meter long and quite harmless. However, due to the sharks, a floating box for speared fish is dragged around on the surface. As soon as a fish is speared, it goes into the box and away from the sharks. Once Doug knew what fish to shoot, he was helping to fill the box. Later that night we all sat around the big table at the pearl farm and enjoyed our catch of the day.

The next morning s/v Illusion, s/v Endless Summer and us, set out to dive the pass. We parked the dinghies on the beach and walked along the shore. At the beginning of the pass we waded in the water and swam to the middle of The channel. From here we were swept through the water at 3 knots. 20 meters down we could see tropical fish and sharks swimming below us. It was like a ride at Disneyland. As we approached our dinghies, the current carried us away and out toward the middle of the lagoon. Fortunately, we caught a back eddy which swirled around a giant coral head and carried us back to our dinghies. From there we swam through a coral garden. Arches, doorways and even tunnels were formed by the different corals. Some were embedded with the giant clams and their iridescent blue, purple and green lips. As we swam under, over and around the coral it reminded me of swimming through a giant house. I half expected to round a corner and see a mermaid lounging in a chair-shaped coral head. All sorts of tropical fish darted around and two bright orange trumpet fish hung out beneath an archway. We could have stayed all day, but when the sharks showed up we headed for home.

Two of the pearl farms enjoy having visitors so we spent several hours touring the operations, snorkeling to watch the divers retrieve the oysters, sharing meals, and just hanging out. Keith and Maria on Tamala volunteered for two weeks at Ahe' Maru Pearl Farm. On weekends people would get together to play guitars and ukuleles and sing traditional Tahitian songs as well as songs in English and French. South Pacific People have musical talent.

These people are also well known for their singing during church. Bruce from Endless Summer and I attended the Catholic Mass. It was a small congregation in a small church, but the singing and music was delightful. The church barely had 30 pews and was decorated with elaborate strands of shells. Later that day we walked the reef to collect our own sea shells as well as the escargot sea snails for dinner.

As wonderful as a place may be, the group of cruisers at an anchorage can make it even better. Ahe had a large group Scandinavians who hung out together and then there was Jamala, Illusion, Endless Summer, Califia And Cross. We all had such a good time together we called our anchorage "Camp Ahe" whether we were off on a snorkeling adventure, cruising the reef, potlucking, or just playing in the water, we had a blast. The anchorage was in an inner-inner lagoon and the water flat and calm, just like a Swimming pool. We could even see the bottom, 10 meters down.

The family on S/V Cross had all kinds of water toys and loved to play games, whether it be ultimate Frisbee or water polo. The Cross kids are famous throughout the cruising community as being the coolest kinds around. One day Doug had the kids over for "Art Day." We made sea shell wind chimes, jewelry, drawing and painting. It was hard to leave such a wonderful place and all the great people. The locals we would miss, but the cruising people we would see again.

Freya navigated the pass with slack tide and with ease. We raised our light wind sails, but the wind was not there. Our good old Yanmar was started and we were underway again with S/V Tamala following. Not 3 hours after leaving the Ahe Atoll in our wake we had a barracuda on the fishing line. Doug brought it up to the side of the boat, knocked it out and carefully stripped the hook, avoiding the sharp, carnivore like teeth. Once it was cut in 2 fillets we prepared to pass 1/2 the fish to Tamala. From our bow to their stern I gently placed a giant fillet into Keith's hands. We all ate well that night. It was a wonderful sail for the next 2 days but we were not sailing fast enough to make it into port by dark, however we could just see the outline of Tahiti.

Without disappointment we slowed the boat down and mentally prepared ourselves for a night being hove to. Still taking air time, yet sailing right along, Doug saw that we had another bite on the fishing gear. This time we caught a Wahoo. Once staked out we again prepared to pass 1/2 the fish to Tamala./ This time the seas were slightly rougher, so as Maria steered Tamala along side Freya, Doug tossed the fish to Keith. Success! Doug lightly steamed our fish in coconut water, and then placed red bell pepper slices (canned) on top with a sprinkling of Parmesan cheese. It was served on a bed of rice and looked as good as it tasted.

We hove to for the night and around 5 am we let out the sails and steered toward Papeete. The lush green foliage glowed in the morning sun. We knew this island experience would be different. We were not headed to a quaint remote village, but to the city. We were ready and even excited, for it is all part of the adventure. I hope you enjoyed the summary of our 1st 3 months in the South Pacific. We look forward to the Cook and Togan adventures.

Jennifer & Doug on s/v Freya

Next Month...Part 2

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT!
Owners Report
A Nor'Sea Guy Sailing to Cabo
on a non Nor'Sea.

I just got back from crewing on a Crealock 34 from San Diego to Cabo San Lucas on the Baja Ha-ha VI. I have some observations that may be of use to Nor'Sea sailors going south. By-the-by I would have been much more comfortable on my Nor'Sea, WINGS, in following seas than I was on the Crealock. Obviously these comments are incomplete but if you have any questions contact me at garycampbell@hotmail.com.

Preparations: Latitude 38 publishes a "First Timer's Guide to Mexico" that is essential; it can be found on the Ha-ha web page (www.baha-haha.com). Going down the coast is probably different each time BUT I think you are crazy if you don't have a pole. I am going to get a second pole so that I can go south with cruising spinnaker and 150 wing-on-wing. Get a wind scoop for the forward hatch. You will also eventually need screens for the hatches and ports. You need some sort of cockpit sun screen. At anchor you will mostly live in the cockpit.

We had a boom break/preventor to prevent Gybes in rolling seas. I am going to research this for WINGS. Get an autopilot and lots of jerry cans of fuel for the southern legs (Baja Filter necessary). There will likely be little or no wind.

Bring lots of JOY; you are not going to find a Porta Shower on the beach in Baja.

Learn enough Spanish to fillout a Zarpe (immigration entry form), feed your self, and get a beer. Get lots and lots of US 1 dollar bills. Prices are cheaper in USD than pesos. Baja seems to work mostly on US Dollars rather than pesos.

Controversy: Don't do the Baja Ha-ha. Sign up, do the San Diego parties and then sail alone or with another small boat. Why? The Crealock I crewed on kept mostly to the Ha-ha schedule. We missed too many small ports that a Nor'Sea could easily get into. Bahia de Tortugas is very nice but we missed a lot of other holes, namely Porto San Carlos south of the Ha-ha stop at Bahia Santa Maria; it's at the upper end of Mag Bay (Bahia Santa Magdalena). There are numerous other places. Don't go at the Ha-ha pace; set your own. That's what Nor'Seas do well. Remember It's over 700nm from SD to Cabo; that's tough for two people. Stop when you feel like it. Schedules are for the IRS.

Read some cruising guides to Baja. Beware, Charlie's Charts is very inaccurate. The Latitude 38 guide is helpful and free.

Filter my words through me. This is my first time down the West coast of Mexico. It was fun but tough. Have fun!

GaryC
WINGS #95

DEISIEL DIGEST
KEEP YOUR DIESEL ENGINE RUNNING "FOREVER"

By Mike Haley
Richmond Boat Works
616 West Cutting Blv.
Richmond Ca. 94804

(510)232-5800
A Yanmar Dealer

Whether you have recently re-powered with a new diesel or had your old one rebuilt, it is possible to keep it healthy and happy for a very, very long time.

Maintaining an engine is more than changing the oil once a year or so, and it is religious maintenance that can give your diesel a life expectancy of 12,000 or 15,000 hours or more. If you put 75 hours a year on your engine, that could mean 200 years!

In the marine environment, condensation is an ongoing problem. In your fuel tank it can lead to dramatic bacteria growth at the interface of the water and fuel, which in turn can clog the primary fuel filter and wreak havoc with the fuel system. The use of a biocide will help, but if your tank has a big load of bacteria in it already and you add the biocide, you will probably find yourself changing out the primary filter every few hours – so have plenty on hand. The best prevention against condensation in your fuel tank is to

KEEP IT FULL ALL THE TIME.

Condensation also occurs inside your engine. You should change the oil and oil filter at least twice a year. Not so much because it's dirty, rather to get the moisture out. And, change the fuel filter now as well. Run the engine as often as you possibly can, even if you're not taking the boat out. Fire it up, put it in gear and run it at 1200-1400 rpm for at least one half hour, at least once per week. This can make an enormous difference in the health and longevity of your engine.

Keep it clean and painted! A two-dollar can of engine enamel can save hundreds of dollars worth of avoidable repairs when your mechanic starts breaking off rusted bolts.

You should change the oil in the transmission every couple of years. Be sure you put in the type recommended for your specific transmission. Some use automatic transmission fluid and some use engine oil.

If you have a fresh water-cooled engine, it's good practice to replace the 50/50 coolant mixture at this interval as well. Note that Yanmar sent out a Service Bulletin earlier this year advising dealers to replace coolant with the pink (silicate-free) type. Their testing showed that the green coolants (containing silicates) were eroding aluminum parts prematurely.

Yanmar fresh water-cooled auxiliary engines do not have zincs in them—all other engines do, either in the heat exchanger or block or head. Keep a careful eye on them and replace them when they are about 50 per cent gone.

If you spend two or three hours a couple times a year on routine engine maintenance, you will be rewarded with reliability, safety and an engine that could last "forever".

Mike Haley
Richmond Boat Works
616 West Cutting Bly.
Richmond Ca. 94804
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UPGRADES
Custom Bedding for the V Birth
By Nancy Saint

An elderly gentleman watched us dock the boat at Gore Bay on Manitoulin Island in Canada this summer. He was obviously intrigued by the boat. In conversation later, we learned that he had almost ordered a NorSea27, but had never seen one up close and personal. Two younger men sailing with him, joined him for an in depth tour of a NorSea 27 and were very impressed.

That evening, at the local recommended restaurant/bar, I could overhear snatches of their conversation enumerating the features of our boat. As we greeted them, one of the men asked just how that V-birth expanded, if it was higher than the settee cushions. (He was VERY perceptive.) I explained the ingenious system. The settee locker cover folds up to support the settee backrest and the backrest cushions complete the expanded V-birth. If you have the original interior on your NorSea, you know what I am trying to explain.

Each evening of our cruise, the bed must be made. I am so glad that the V-birth doesn't go as far as the table, so all the "stuff" that accumulates on the table can remain undisturbed. In order to add to the comfort of our V-birth, I have added an "egg crate" foam cushion and custom fitted sheets.

I bought the egg crate foam and then cut it to exactly cover the v-birth. I then sewed a cover for it using a sheet and flannel fabric. I closed it with velcro so that it could be taken off and washed.

Next, I made a fitted bottom sheet that fits just this foam pad. Use the dimensions of the foam, plus about 6 - 10 inches that turn under. I think this required a king size flat sheet. At the corners, I added elastic to keep the sheet in place. If we need to get to the lockers under the V-birth, I just roll up the foam with the sheets attached and tie a line around it. When evening comes, it is a simple process to unroll the foam.

The top sheet is fitted to the narrow end of the foam, but I have added pleats to the sheet to give your toes extra room. A triangle piece of fabric is added and folded under so that the sheet is snug around the bottom of the foam. I shaped the sides of the sheet to follow the shape of the v-birth. Complete step-by-step instructions are available (from the editor).

We find that a light down comforter is just perfect for cool nights in the North Chanel and if its too hot, it is easily compressed and stowed under the cushions. A comfortable nights sleep can help you face the winds and waves of the new day with enthusiasm.

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UPGRADES
FEATHERING PROPS

From: YenYang27@webtv.net

I noticed a couple comments/ questions of interest regarding handling Norse's around slips and the CDI feathering prop, that I can comment on.

It's reassuring to know that someone else has trouble backing the Nor'sea in tight quarters; maybe it's not TOTALLY

me or my technique. The wind always seems to be in control of the bow (it blows off - immediately). The wind is in control, not me. Thank goodness the Nor'sea is only 27 feet long. In order to get better control, I ordered a CDI three blade feathering prop two years ago. The prop does respond quickly in reverse. And has a lot of reverse power, but the wind on the bow still determines whether I'll look like an amateur (we've had the boat six years) or pro when backing. Of course, I'd welcome any suggestions, since I tend to avoid slips whenever possible. In addition, the prop NEVER feathered. CDI worked with me for two years (sending it back and forth for adjustments), without success. According to them, this was a first; they finally wrote it off to keel turbulence. They were sure it would work on a fin keel, but I haven't tried it. To be fair, CDI was willing to work with me and gave the option of a full or half refund (and keep the prop), which they honored. The bottom line is that I wouldn't recommend the CDI feathering prop for a Nor'Sea.

Editors Note:

For your information, I went to the CDI home page and they are no longer selling a feathering prop.

If anyone knows of a better prop for the Nor'Sea, let us know about it!

NEWS From NO NEWS December 15, 1999

The stern of the boat is tied to posts and the bow to a concrete walk. The cool evening breeze helps to keep the pesky "no-see-ums" at bay. A short walk to the east gets us to a new Publix grocery store and to the north is a restaurant serving delicious breakfast and lunch. We watch the fishermen leave the harbor and return before dark with satisfied customers and coolers of fish. A large scarred manatee slowly maneuvers through the harbor to get to a garden hose for a long drink of fresh water. This is Christmas in Florida.

Ed Note: If you have not been there yet, Stop by the Saints home page! It's looking GREAT. Sign there guest log and say hi to the as they cruise. It's at: <http://home.att.net/~nonews/>

EQUIPMENT FOR SALE or WANTED

Nor'Sea 27 WANTED

late model, well equipped, trailer preferred, but will consider all.

Mel Levine

4625 Paseo Del Sueno

Tucson, AZ. 85745

520-743-7881

Blugey@aol.com

Nor'Sea 27 WANTED

I am looking for the 'right' Nor'Sea 27 for my family to purchase. We require an aft-cabin model and would like to find a late model unit.

AL Miller

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300 Main St.
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**Published, edited, typed, and stamped aboard
Guenevere (Nor'Sea Hull #80) by:
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