

THE *Typhooner*

a newsletter for owners of CAPE DORY TYPHOON sailboats, and other Cape Dory sailboats, as well as for those who want to own one, and those who once owned one, and now realize that selling the neat little boats they had was the biggest mistake of their lives.

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irregular (free, for the present)

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Thank you for your cordial reception of *the Typhooner*, no. 1, and for the money you sent for postage, as well as for those who offered support during my recent back surgery. The surgery went very well, was entirely successful, and I am now back on my feet and expect to go sailing with a friend next Thursday, 9 February, weather permitting. Please do not send any more money for the present, as I have now received a total of \$85.00, which should quite suffice for postage. I figure I spent around 20 (per person on my mailing list) x \$0.34 for long envelopes (before 1 January 1995), plus a cent x 3 pages x 20 for laser-printer paper; that comes to \$6.80 + \$0.60 = \$7.40 spent on getting *the Typhooner* out last time. So without a formal organization, or a treasurer to report to, I don't want to accumulate a large fund of unspent cash. Similarly I am not starting a separate account (although my mailing list has notes of who paid what, and when) because the bank charges would simply eat it up. When the time comes I can do so, but not until it becomes imperative. Finally, the ISSN on the masthead is an International Standard Serials Number. It helps libraries order periodicals. If you know of a library that wants to get *the Typhooner*, please let me know. It would probably be one collecting maritime history, or one serving a yacht club or a port with lots of sailboats.

A geographical breakdown of subscribing owners past and present: California 5, Florida 4, Maryland 2, Massachusetts 5, Minnesota 3, New York 1, Ohio 1 (homeports in Virginia). If we ever hold a meeting, maybe it should be in Massachusetts or Florida.

I have also heard from Nauset Marine and some others of you concerning Carl Alberg and the history of the Cape Dory sailboats. My own search of biographical dictionaries and indexes, both to reference books and to periodicals and newspapers, brought me no information on Carl Alberg, so I have had to rely on what you, my correspondents, have told me. Sifting and blending these reports, some of which disagree with each other and leave gaps in time, I came up with the following:

Carl Alberg was born in Sweden, and emigrated to the United States — dates of both events are not given, but he was apparently young enough to join the U. S. Coast Guard. While in that service he designed the Sea Sprite, the Pearson Triton, and the Bristol 27. Later he designed the Alberg 30 and 35, and then began (around 1963?) the Cape Dory line, starting with the Typhoon. A photograph of him, taken around 1979, presumably in his middle years, shows a serious, rather full, face, rather reminiscent of a Swedish prime minister. Alberg lived in Marblehead, and was an active member of the Boston Yacht Club. He died around 1987.

Typhoons were first built by Naugus Industries in Salem, Massachusetts, according to one of my sources. I am not sure whether Alberg founded the company, or whether he was hired as designer. Cape Dory Yachts was founded in 1963 by Andy Vavalotis, who apparently bought the Typhoon mold and started renumbering the hulls from No. 1. Vavalotis turned later to commercial fishing vessels, and in 1987 or 1990 (our sources differ) Cape Dory ceased production (Typhoon production ceasing sometime prior to that) and the focus was placed on the Typhoon Senior, apparently a larger version of the Weekender. When the Cape Dory Company was liquidated in the 1980's Nauset Marine purchased the molds for the 25 and 25D, 26D and 270 sailboats. The Typhoon and Senior models were purchased by another party who was not in the boat business. At that same sale, a company was formed called Newport Shipyards, which picked up most of the power boat molds and all the remaining sailboat molds. This company defaulted on its purchase, however, and after a lot of legal argle-bargle Nauset Marine was able to purchase all the molds that they were interested in, including the Typhoon Weekender and Daysailer, the Typhoon Senior, and several larger vessels, around thirty and thirty-three feet, both sail and power. Nauset Marine plans to exhibit the new Weekender at the New England Boat Show in Boston this month. Their letter to me dated 6 January gives every indication of their being seriously in business.

The latest issue of *Practical sailor* (v. 21, no. 3, 1 February 1995) says that Andy Vavalotis is now in Robinhood, Maine, building Cape Dory 36's and 40's; from the same address: Robinhood Marine Center, Robinhood, ME 04530, you can get

the appropriate hardware from his company, Spartan Marine. I don't know if anyone is making Dragonfly sails, with which my boat came.

Incidentally, two or three correspondents referred to Brian Conner or O'Connor, who is building Typhoons on Cape Cod. Could he actually be part of the Nauset Marine enterprise? Their town, Orleans, is on Cape Cod. Searching for the current address of Typhoon manufacturers had me scurrying to various sources in Maine, Massachusetts, and New York, until the notice appeared in *Practical sailor*.

A question: I have received a request for a copy of the old owner's manual for the Weekender and Daysailer. I could make this, but it runs to some seventy pages. Could Nauset Marine issue a new one? Their office could order a whole lot of them from a Boston printer, and distribute them more cheaply than my photocopying page after page. Their address: Nauset Marine, P. O. Box 357, Orleans, MA 06253.

In the meanwhile, according to a clipping from the Martinez, California *News-Gazette* (5 January 1995) a California Cape Dory Owners Association has been formed, consisting (at present) of 28's and 30's — larger than Typhoons; you will notice that the masthead of *the Typhoon* has been altered slightly to accommodate them, although the emphasis will (for the present) remain on the Typhoons. Big boats and little boats are different, and I, at least, would like to see this newsletter and any consequent organization go national, rather than be confined to California. That address: Michael P. Fahy, P. O. Box 861, Martinez, CA 94553.

Still to be answered: how was the name Typhoon selected? And another query: was Carl's name originally Ålberg or Aalberg? That version sounds more Swedish; and it would have been easy for him, arriving in this country, to drop the Scandinavian letter which stands for a double "a" with a glottal stop, since that sound isn't heard in standard English anyway.

Races: they did take place. The PHRF cruising rating of a Typhoon Weekender is about 295, and racing rating is 307. Races took place in Marblehead, and also Newport. This last I learned from a photocopy of the fall 1986 issue of the Cape Dory Owners Association *Newsletter*, then published out of P. O. Box 11, East Taunton, MA 02718; the newsletter also illustrates their logo, block letters "CD", orange on blue. The text is full of upbeat words, and plans for a glorious future, so it must have been quite a disappointment to the many owners when the company folded a few years later. Nauset Marine sent this photocopy; let's hope they have the complete backfiles of the newsletter.

Please keep sending me more information about Typhoon history. Company histories are a neglected field of research, especially in the boatbuilding business, which is apt to be full of sudden changes, abrupt sales, and bankruptcies (here in California we have the same problems with small wineries). Even more important, I need more entries for the *Directory*. So I can be sure that you actually want to be listed, please follow the format mentioned in the last issue: name, mailing address, phones, name of boat, model, hull no. or other ID, homeport, club membership, modifications, miscellaneous. The *Directory*, as I have it, comes with this issue.

Problems with the boats: roller-furling mainsails have been mentioned, also loose cabin tops on the Weekender. I have no trouble with a roller-furling mainsail on mine, mostly because I adhere to the rule of “reef before you have to”, i.e. while still at the dock; apparently doing it underway causes problems, as the grinder tends to chew up the sail. (Might this take another pair of hands? Some things are hard to do when singlehanding). Exploring these troubles, and also discussing modifications which some owners find necessary (a boom vang?) would help the current manufacturer anticipate troubles as they continue to turn out Cape Dory Typhoons. By the way, how many of you out there singlehand your boats? I don't, at least not yet! And how many of you varnish? I just oil my teak!

Have a happy spring (the first almond blossoms are coming out here) and we'll see each other on the water, or at least in print.

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