

# 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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A VERY PLEASANT HOLIDAY SEASON TO ALL TYPHOON OWNERS!

As of date I have 141 readers, in every coastal and Great Lake state *except*: Alabama, Alaska, Delaware, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington. Inland I have readers in Arkansas, Colorado, and West Virginia; also one in the District of Columbia and one in Puerto Rico, plus one up in Québec. I have received \$175 in contributions, and spent \$123.27 for the last issue (this includes postage). I am therefore ahead for the time being, although any further contributions are welcome. Since there is no formal organization, I am not charging subscriptions or dues at this point: just keeping you folks posted. (I underestimated the number of readers last time around, as 90; it was then closer to 130. Also, in listing the total number of readers, I am counting couples as one person, and those who have summer addresses and winter addresses, as a half each).

I have all the back issues on my computer, so that you can ask for them if you're catching up. I could also put them on a Macintosh floppy disk, if you have the right computer (mine is a Mac PowerBook 160). There is no charge for all this; as I wrote before, I am not representing any organization, just getting info and passing it along.

You haven't heard from me since August, but now that the final, and longest, issue of my other newsletter, *Sipapu*, is off to the printer, I can get back to *the Typhooner* and catch up on all your news and correspondence.

Since we last met, I have enjoyed a sail with Mr. and Mrs. Mike Sheridan, who are Cape Dory owners, though not of a Typhoon; their *Naga* is the 35' model. And to my delight, I received a visit from Mr. Joe Pettus, of Maryland, who was exploring the West Coast by car for the first time in his life. He called me from the corner drugstore in Winters, and we had a pleasant half-hour together in my home; a pity he couldn't spare the time to help me sail *Fair American*. He, as have others, added his name and the information about his boat to the *Cape Dory Typhoon Owners' Directory*, so if you haven't seen a new *Directory*, you might ask me for one, because it includes several new names, including his, that you might want to get into contact with. The *Directory*, as you will recall, is only a small part of the mailing list. Getting on the *Directory* is optional, but welcomed.

Speaking of my *Fair American*, it's recently been out of the water: getting a fall overhaul, since it's been in the water continuously since I bought it in December 1992. Not much wrong; a few blisters, but delamination in the vicinity of the rudder, which would have been serious some day if I had not had it corrected now. The rigging (cables) will need to be replaced soon, as they original rigging has been there since the boat was built in 1979. The boat came with an arrow-shaped wind indicator, which I had replaced with a Windex® indicator; this type has a forked fishtail to leeward, with a needle point between the tails; keeping this indicator outside the two little squares on the tips of the fishtail helps you avoid accidental gybes when sailing downwind. In trying to motor *Fair American* to the lift, the Nissan outboard wouldn't start. I rarely use it, since the boat is docked to windward, and it isn't necessary. Now I will have to have it worked on; I'm in no hurry, but I hate the cost. At least one marine shop I know, in West Sacramento, hates Nissans and will have nothing to do with them. Any comments?

An article in *Sailing*, February 1993, under the section "Retrofitting", gives details of the Typhoon plus costs of materials and sources. It describes problems I have not heard of elsewhere, such as the decks and non-skid patches, and recommends installing life lines, pulpits (fore or aft), and running lights (I have flashlights ready for attachment, by suction cups, to the deck, and since I sit *in* the boat, not on it, and have a jib downhaul leading to the cockpit, I haven't found the need for lifelines or pulpits). Although the article is aimed mostly at Weekender owners, it says nothing about the cabin top problem! I have copies of this article if you want them.

You East Coast skippers who haul your boats out every fall must have a lot to work on or worry about; I don't know if I could afford to have a boat back there! If you encounter persistent or consistent problems on these occasions, please

send me a note for reprinting here; the whole point of this newsletter is to pool information and resources.

I have an E-Z Loader trailer to go with my boat. I don't need this trailer; it came with the boat, but I'm keeping *Fair American* in the water at Berkeley. This trailer needs some work; it's been recently repainted (but not very well), and one of the tail lights is broken. It's a single axle, so only suitable for light boats, without inboards. My Toyota Corolla wagon doesn't have a towing ball, and is itself too light for the job. Call me if you're interested, and are prepared to come and pick it up, just as it is; I'm asking \$700 or best offer.

I get requests every so often for copies of the manual. My copy was sent me by a skipper in Massachusetts (where, incidentally, I have the greatest number of readers: 23). It goes on for over 70 pages, and the copyright is dated 1978. The copyright holder is Cape Dory Yachts, Inc., and the introduction is by Andrew Vavalotis. As I see it, putting over 70 pages through a copy machine by hand is a lot of work, especially if the word gets around; and Kinko's, the local chain copy shop, won't copy anything with a copyright on it without a written permission slip. They got hit with a multi-million dollar suit a few years ago, and they're scared. The problem is, who now has copies of the manual, or a new manual, and to whom has the copyright descended, with the breakup of the original company, and the reassignment of the rights and molds to different outfits? That I cannot tell, but here are some relevant addresses:

Cape Dory  
Newport Shipyards  
334 S. Bayview Avenue  
Amityville, NY 11701  
(516) 264-1313

Robinhood Boatbuilders  
Robinhood Marine Center, Bath, ME 04530  
I think this is where Andrew Vavalotis hangs his hat; they list their address as Robinhood, ME, but there is no such post office, and the Zip code is that of Bath; their phone no. is 800-255-5206.

Nauset Marine  
P. O. Box 357  
Orleans, MA 02653  
(508) 255-0777

These last are the people licensed to make Typhoons. They do so, however, only on a custom basis. Whether they would distribute their manual to owners of older Typhoons, or whether they even have a manual, I don't know. In any case,

the way to get any of these folks to respond is to snowball them with requests. It seems to me that they have the moral obligation, if not the legal one, to keep owners informed about their products. It would also seem to me that this would be good business. But then we can't tell another man how to run his business!

In any case, if you get any responses, helpful or otherwise, let me know, please, so that I can tell the rest of you.

Finally, I expect publication, in late 1995 or early 1996, of my little book, *Hydra and Kraken: the lore and lure of lake-monsters and sea-serpents* (70 pages, illustrations, \$9.95 from Regent Press, 6020-A Adeline, Oakland, CA 94608). While it's scholarly, with footnotes, and carefully weighed evidence, it's meant to be read for pleasure (on a stormy winter's night). In fact, if it doesn't cause your weary, weather-beaten faces to crease into a faint smile, I suggest that you are suffering from a disorder a lot worse than *mal de mer*. Best query the publisher directly; we're planning to get it into bookstores, but Regent Press is a small publisher, and advertises largely through direct mail.

**MORE ON CARL ALBERG:** Richard Henderson, of Gibson Island, Maryland, author of many nautical books including *Choice yacht designs* (Camden, ME, International Marine Publishing Co., 1979), knew Alberg well. Henderson sought lines plans for all the boats in the book, but Pearson Yachts would not release the lines of the Triton. Carl was indignant and drew a new set of lines (slightly modified) especially for Henderson's book. Henderson was (naturally) overwhelmed. Carl was one of the top designers for John Alden, designing the last three *Malabars* and other famous boats: *Staghound*, twice winner of the Transpac race, and *Rubaiyat*, twice winner of the Chicago-Mackinac race. See also Henderson's *John G. Alden and his yacht designs*, (Camden, ME., Int'l Marine, 1983), with which Alberg assisted. Alberg sent his last design, just before his death, to Henderson for comment. I hope to get further details of Alberg's life in subsequent issues of *the Typhoon*.

**MORE TECHNICAL STUFF:** As I go through my files, organized by owner's last names, I'll catch everyone's correspondence dated later than 31 August. I always do some minor editing for clarity, and I assume that anything you write can be shared; otherwise, what's the purpose of this newsletter?

Also, if you ever have trouble finding who makes what, any large public or academic library will surely have a pair of volumes, entitled *Brand names and their companies*, and *Companies and their brand names*. They're frequently updated and will help you find anything likely to be found in your fellow-skippers' correspondence.

CDR John R. Butler, who has written for us before, tells us that he has added a lazarette to his Weekender, *Joy II*, and would be happy to share details of this space-saver and clutter-control. Write him at 16855 Heritage Bay Road, Rogers, AR 72756. He also reports that besides his main and working jib, with reefs, he has a genoa, a cruising spinnaker, and a storm jib by Sittel of Tulsa. The storm jib has luff, leech, and foot dimensions as follows: 14'7", 11'5" and 5'7". On Beaver Lake the winds can top 30 knots and with the storm jib and a main with two reefs, it works great. It's cold on this north Arkansas lake and when it drops below freezing, he's prepared with a Cole stove (is this a Coleman?) In order to ground the vessel electrically, Commander Butler has added a bronze grounding plate on the hull exterior, connected it to a port chain plate via heavy copper wire, and also to a lightning arrester in the VHF-FM antenna at the top of *Joy II*'s mast, plus of course the battery and electrical panel. In case of thunderstorms he has a plastic jar of four chains with big "S" hooks at one end that can be hooked over the stays and dropped overboard. We don't have many thunderstorms in northern California but they can be quite frequent almost everywhere else in the lower 48. If I were sailing on Lake Tahoe, for example, I'd be sure to have adequate protection, even if I had the boat at the dock. See farther on for lightning protection on Typhoons.

Larry Cushman, of 15089 Eclipse Drive, Manassas, VA 22111, writes: "I was contacted one cold morning in October 1993 by a boat owner with a problem. It seems his Typhoon had broken loose from its mooring during the night and found its way alongside a neighbor's dock. Through this, along with some high winds and unusual tides, the boat sank.

The owner's proposition was this: if I got it off the bottom and out of his hair, he would sign it over to me. The next day, the boat was off the bottom, and in my back yard.

The extent of damage was limited to some deep scratches, cracked and missing toe and rub rails, all on the port side. But the most significant problem was not the result of the sinking, but the result of neglect. As it had been in the water continuously for over eight years, the boat's gelcoat blistering was severe. I sandblasted the bottom clean, removing all blisters and soft glass. I then let her sit on the trailer and dry for 18 months.

Next step was to use the Interlux 1000/2000 barrier system to seal and refinish the bottom. I then painted the rest of the hull and topside with Interthane, plus two-part polyurethane paint. She now looks like a new Typhoon, right out of the mold — almost!"

It looks as if Larry Cushman has got himself a beautiful Weekender for *absolutely nothing*, his for the cost of a haulout, plus tools, paint, and elbow-grease. Whaddya say, is this man lucky or not? And don't you just hate to see an abandoned, half-ruined boat, as you hate to see a neglected dog or a starving cat? My holiday wish is that all abandoned pets and boats find a loving owner for keeps this year!

John Danicic, Jr., 4220 Scott Terrace, Edina, MN 55416, has some questions about a boat trailer which I am unable to answer. His trailer "is an E-Z Loader that has been used mainly for storage. The current 10-foot launching tongue extension needs to be replaced. It adds about six feet to the trailer. *Should I go for a longer tongue or is this enough distance to float the boat?* This is an externally mounted launching tongue of 2 inches square steel pipe, that you have to pick up and insert into a box sleeve mounted next to the towing tongue. Also: concerning the boat: does anyone have other solutions than expensive knees (see *Typhoon* #3) for the cabin sag / mast support? I thought maybe a wooden beam under the mast, supported from the sides by wooden angles, and attached to the chain plate access structure, would help. What do your readers think?"

The E-Z Loader Boat Trailers, Inc., is located at P. O. Box 3263, Spokane, WA 99220, and their phone is (509) 489-0181. When I contacted them, they said that they were the biggest boat trailer people in the world; that they had international distribution, and that they made an incredible 40,000 boat trailers a year. If they can't help you in this boat trailer area, I guess nobody ever could! For more on the shrouds and cabin top, read on.

Mike Fahy's present business address is Anchorage Brokers and Consultants, 1 Gate Five Road, Sausalito, CA 94965, (415) 332-7245. He sometimes has Cape Dories for sale, although, like any agent, he can't sell anything he doesn't have listed. You might want to give him a call. (I'm not charging for this kind of ad).

Hugh Fincher (Sarasota, FL) wonders what the displacement of his *Typhoon* is (it's one ton, exactly) and says that his detachable motor mount (*Sparrow* is a Weekender) should be braced and secured. "If your motor doesn't have a reverse and you swivel it around, it is likely to jump up into the cockpit with you unless you brace and secure the detachable bracket". He also had the water-damaged knees replaced before the shrouds broke loose.

Winthrop Fisher (3103 Timber View Drive, Sugar Land, TX 77479) says that the reason that some people have that problem with their stays and the cabin or doghouse, is that they tune their rig too tight. When you go sailing from one tack to another, the stays should be loose, not tight like a wind instrument. For your fuse box use Seadog panels; they are the easiest to use and install; put them

next to the bulkhead. He recommends an Attwood 450 bilge pump; run a hose to the stern and put a through-hull fitting there. He has a lot more to recommend about teak oils and varnishes, but he very sensibly bought covers (through BOAT/U.S.) to protect his *Easy Rider*. Mr. Fisher seems very knowledgeable about some of these details and you may wish to write him directly.

Seaborn P. Jones, of 912 West Ponce de Leon Avenue, Decatur, Georgia 30030, gives the dimensions of the original genoa and jib, made by Cheoy Lee of Hong Kong, as follows: genoa, luff 19' 4", leech 18'8", foot 10'9"; jib, luff 19'4", leech 17'6", foot 7'3". (He doesn't include the main). "These sails have bronze grommets for attaching to the forestay; there is no luff wire." (In my own experience the grommets are not too difficult to hank on, and I installed a jib downhaul, so that no one would have to go forward to drop the jib at the end of the day. These dimensions are useful because after the PRC takes over Hong Kong in 1997 it is unlikely that you can get your sails made there; you will perhaps need to have your sails customized by an American maker, which will cost you a chunka moola). Seaborn Jones also says "Weekender 1098 does not have any provisions for a battery or fuse switch panel," which strikes me as incredible. How is the owner to empty the bilge? Even my Daysailer has these conveniences, although I had to have the wiring replaced. The aforementioned article on retrofitting Typhoons, in *Sailing*, February 1993, mentions Gleason Sails, 213 Ferry Avenue, Charlevoix, MI 49720, as an inexpensive source; check with them at 800-253-5504.

B. M. ("Mike") Sheridan (note correct spelling of name!) of 2 Admiral Drive, #B382, Emeryville, CA 94608 — he and his wife were my hosts for a day's sail this summer — sent me an 18-page, double-spaced, treatise, "Primer on boat electricity", dated February 1993. Even reducing it to eight or nine pages would be too much for this newsletter, but if you drive a Weekender, or any larger Cape Dory, or other boat, or if you are buying or selling a boat, you might want to write him for a copy. The paper concludes with a glossary, and tables for current capacity and current/wire length.

A letter from Dr. Douglas Walters (11 Drumcliffe, Warren, PA 16365), postmarked 8 September, seems worth quoting in full:

"I recently viewed a video on lightning and sailboats produced by the Florida Sea Grant, University of Florida, Box 110409, Gainesville, FL 32611, dated 1992. The video details how to protect a sailboat from the damage associated with lightning strikes by way of grounding and bonding systems as well as electronics protection.

Part of the video showed an interview with a Dr. Roger Keroack whose unprotected boat was struck by lightning on a Florida lake. What caught my eye was that the boat was a Typhoon Weekender. Dr. Keroack described how little damage there appeared to be on initial inspection: a fuse panel loose from the wall with broken glass in it, a lamp shade blown off and the bulb exploded, a missing wind indicator at the masthead, but no other visible damage. However, a slow leak in the bilge caused him to haul the boat, whereupon he discovered about 40 spider-web-shaped cracks in the fiberglass hull covering the keel, each one with a tiny hole in its center; the largest one being the size of a match head.

I would like to repeat my earlier inquiry from owners, as to wheather any of them have installed grounding protection on their boats. Also if any of our owners in Florida know of Dr. Keroack. I would like to have his address aor phone number to see if he has since protected his now repaired boat, and how he did it. ... his boat's registration is FL8906EJ." — (Ed. note: he's not on my mailing list).

Dr. Walters continues: "I am particularly concerned about this because electrical storms are a frequent occurrence in my area" (this is the upper Allegheny valley, in northwestern Pennsylvania; he sails on Lake Chautauqua, New York) "and the video states that boats kept on fresh water are far more likely to suffer significant damage when struck than the same boat would suffer had it been on salt water. This is due to the poorer electrical conductivity of fresh water. Therefore voltages approximately a thousand times greater than would occur on salt water, build up on the boat moored in fresh water, before discharging to ground through the fiberglass hull.

Other important points that the video stressed are: that installing such a system does *not* increase the chance of your boat being hit; that using jumper cables from rigging to water is very inadequate and perhaps useless; and that even in an unprotected sailboat we are still much safer than in an open motorboat.

Any help you could give in locating Dr. Keroack would be appreciated. — P. S. Perhaps he'd like to join us!"

As stated above, I have no listing for Dr. Keroack, but perhaps some other Floridians saw the video or have contact with the Florida Sea Grant. The state boating office is the Florida Dep't. of Natural Resources, 3900 Commonwealth Blvd., Tallahassee, FL 32399. From the description of what happened to the hull, I'd suggest that it was a good thing that Dr. Keroack was not aboard that boat when the lightning struck.

Dr. Dennis E. Wilcoxon, 955 54th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL 33703 (he's an optometric physician), has a number of comments about the August 1995, issue no. 5 of *the Typhooner*:

"My *Puffin* hasn't experienced the failings mentioned in earlier issues. I haul her from the ramp at my marina twice a year. ... I must, of course, extend the tongue with anchor line and use wheel chocks while I hook back up.

Storm sails? I've found that the working job alone doesn't over-power the boat in 30 knots of wind. She *will* go to weather under jib alone. I frequently sail in our thunderstorms in the summer and our cold-fronts in the winter. I enjoy the thrill of high wind in *Puffin* and actively court these situations. Since I live aboard a larger sailboat and moor *Puffin* beside me, I can go out at a moment's notice. We have acted as a rescue vessel on two occasions in sudden summer thunderstorms. I can haul sail and be on the scene before the Coast Guard even knows of these situations. I always wear my hybrid harness in bad weather, and I lock the hatch and boards closed. A strong padeye below the companionway and a ten-foot tether allow bow-to-stern access without unclipping.

Woodwork? It looks great gray... I love what the little boat looks like slicing through the blue waves with dolphins at the bow. ... Self-steering? A Saye's rig" (what's that? Ed.) "should work very well on the Typhoon. It's light and simple and made for the kind of rudder they have. I have found even a simple autopilot unnecessary, since the boats balance so well. With a bit of luff in the main, she holds course well to about 120° of the wind. You sacrifice speed but can read or snooze. I've made a simple little gadget with pvc pipe to lock the helm; costs about \$1.50 in hardware." (See him for drawing).

Serge Zimberoff (2517 Farrier Court, Santa Rosa, CA 95401) writes about his custom-made trailer: it needs some work on the axles, and lacks rollers; so the trailer is really designed to work with a sling. However there is no sling where he docks his boat, so here how he gets his Weekender, *Cloning Around*, launched:

"With the boat mast stepped and rigged we back down the launch ramp until the towing vehicle is just at water's edge. Then our procedure (contingent on having one of those single wheels that you crank-up to raise and lower the tongue) is like this: [1] we fasten two lines to the trailer, a heavy working line and a lighter safety line, [2] with blocks under the trailer wheels and hitch released we raise the tongue off the hitch, [3] by taking a turn around the trailer ball two strong folks can hold the trailer while the blocks are removed from the trailer wheels, [4] line is slowly let out till the trailer is totally submerged and the boat floats free, [5] the line is snubbed and the now empty trailer is pulled out of the water, held with blocks, and re-hitched to the towing vehicle. It sounds involved but

two healthy, strong adults can do it in 15 minutes or so (not counting stepping and rigging)."

Concerning the perennial coach-roof problem on Weekenders, Mr. Zimmeroff continues:

" ... obviously there is some need for reinforcement to keep the strain of the shrouds from eventually causing serious damage. This showed up on our boat on the fiberglass deck below the cockpit sole. From inside the cabin looking aft there is a structural fiberglass ridge running laterally. Then there is a flat section before it narrows considerably into a tunnel going all the way to the stern. This flat section had begun to buckle long before we owned the boat. With the boat out of the water and the mast unstepped so that there was no strain from the shrouds, I modified some small screw jacks to fit below and with a large plywood piece to distribute the load against the underside of the cockpit sole, I was able to flatten this ridge out. Then I carved two ribs of close grain kiln-dried Douglas fir 2"x4". One fit across the wide section of the fiberglass and one back where the tunnel began to get narrow. Once fitted, these ribs were taken out and given several coats of epoxy finish except the edges that were to go against the boat and one inch up the faces. Then these ribs were bonded, one at a time, into the boat, using epoxy thickened with microballoons. A fillet was carefully formed up the sides on the forward and aft edges of these ribs.

When all clamps were released some days later the job looked just fine. It has been back in the water now for three months after the repair and the ribs seem to do the job. I would suggest that this area be watched carefully and at the first sign of trouble, or earlier on a preventive basis, ribs be installed this way. It sounds a lot like the story you printed about the knees that one boat owner had to install across the top of the cabin. Most of us have boats that someone has added a post to that runs from below the mast step to the bunk deck below. This seems to be there to distribute the load to prevent damage to the cabin area."

**BURGEE:** John T. Menocal of Annapolis wrote to ask if there was a burgee for Typhoons. The material that friends have sent me from the days when Cape Dory yachts of all kinds were being built, and when there was an active owners' association, says that there was a Cape Dory burgee with the letters "CD" in blue and white. There does not seem to have been a separate one for Typhoons. I do not know whether the designing of a burgee by right belongs to the manufacturer (who in this case would be Nauset Marine) or whether anyone can design a burgee for a class of boat. The mainsail on mine bears the letters TY, with the Y slightly below the T: see Richard M. Sherwood's *Field guide to sailboats*, 2nd edition, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1994, p. 98-99 and 403. If designing a burgee for Typhoons only were left up to me, I would design a burgee using this

logo, in blue and yellow. I suggest these colors because they are the colors of the flag of Sweden, and thereby pay tribute to the boat's designer, Carl Alberg, who was born and trained in that country. But my own boat already has a burgee, showing that I belong to the OCSC sailing club, and tradition says you shouldn't fly two burgees at once. And we sailors are strong on tradition!

**NAUTICAL CHARTS:** In response to an alert in *Seaworthy*, the newsletter of the Boat Owner's Association of the U. S., concerning the appropriation for the National Ocean Service, which updates nautical charts, I sent a letter (on my *Fair American* letterhead, with a copy of the *Seaworthy* article) to my senators recommending that this funding be continued as a matter of boating safety. I got a courteous letter back from Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), indicating that the Senate had "conformed with the Administration's numbers and approved \$31.086 million for funding for mapping and charting functions of the National Ocean Service in the Commerce, Justice, State, and Judiciary Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 1996. The Senate then passed the bill on September 29 and it now goes to conference where differences between the House and Senate versions will be reconciled." Senator Feinstein's letter is dated 16 November and I received it 21 November. In view of the recent compromise between the Administration and Congress on funding for FY 1996, of which the details apparently are still to be worked out, I am not sure how much of these funds will still be available. You may wish to check with your Federal lawmakers for further information. As stated above, I wrote purely as a private individual and did not attempt to speak for other boat owners.

**THAT'S ALL FOR THE MOMENT;** I'll be back early next year with more Cape Dory Typhoon information, as you come back to me with the same. Have a wonderful and safe holiday on whatever waters you can get out on. Keep in touch!

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