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Rescuing Thelma

By Chad Thompson

It is now two years since the big Thelma first went on the market after her restoration in San Francisco and shipment to the Mediterranean. It is now amazing finally to be able to say, She is on the way home.

Marg, my wife, and I had been planning for some time a holiday in the Med in which we were to meet up with our daughter and race with her on Mariquita (a beautiful classic the size of Moonbeam IV), the yacht she crews on. In anticipation of the journey, I had planned to see Thelma to be able to report from personal experience on her condition to any prospective buyer. I had known that her present owner, Phil Dickinson of Sydney, had substantially modified his expectations in terms of an asking price, but didn't know what that figure was.

Shortly after arriving at Imperia, where we were to be racing with Emily, I received an e-mail from Phil



Hanging in the balance ... Thelma's return to NZ was not assured until an 11th-hour mission

indicating that there was a British syndicate prepared to offer X Euros. I immediately went back to him reinforcing how important the yacht was to New Zealand's maritime history and asking if we could have a week in which to pull together an offer to match the Brits.

I sent off a couple of e-mails and CYA Chairman,

Tony Blake, who was also at Imperia, contacted John Street. Things started to happen. John smartly set about bringing together the funds to give to the Classic Yacht Trust the wherewithal needed to buy Thelma.

By the time everyone had agreed to the purchase, we had in fact gone over the week's deadline. Marg and I

were now in St Tropez close to where Thelma was and I had this terrible feeling that if we didn't do the deal that night of the 25th September, we were going to miss out. After exchanging several faxes and numerous phone calls gaining the signatures of all parties, I was able

Continued overleaf

Galatea struggles on

Concluding a Cautionary Tale of Nautical Negligence ...

By David Waddingham

We had tucked on a cautionary reef and we laughed at the apparently paranoid weather forecast as we rounded the last marker buoy and started heading north.

Soon enough, however, the first ominous huge fuzzy-edged cold front cloud approached and the wind accordingly started to significantly increase in strength, knocking up a frightening looking angry white sea to windward that left the foam on the surface

lying in streaky lines, and us hanging on to the ship like rodeo riders.

The wind was blowing off the quarter and we knew there was no way that we'd be able to turn back and point into it, so we were compelled to ride it out with the ship travelling at amazing speeds surfing down the steep large waves that had built in a surprisingly short fetch. We anxiously eyed the rig and old sails and hoped everything would hold together through the onslaught. Casting an eye down below, however, we noticed the ship, which



Intent on getting home to avoid yet another night of torture

Thelma's homecoming ...

to go down to the boat the next morning knowing that, subject to satisfactory survey, she was on her way back to New Zealand. Just as well. The skipper of Thelma had arrived 24 hours earlier to prepare the yacht for the St Tropez Regatta and officially list the yacht for sale with a European broker. In doing so he was to then introduce his charter crew for the regatta to the broker and present an offer to the owner.

Her return to New Zealand is one of the few

remaining opportunities for the enlargement of our yachting heritage fleet. There are some other Logan and Bailey gaffers in Australia. However, there is no bigger Logan racing classic than Thelma. The sight of her out on the Auckland Harbour along with the other gaffers will be something for all to marvel at. New Zealand's yachting heritage is alive and very well thanks to the generosity of her buyers and the other owners of our other beautiful classics.



Support Sea Dogs

The CYA initiative to set up a group of young sailors, under the banner of "Sea Dogs", to help man our rapidly increasing fleet of yachts and launches is beginning to take off and will be in place for the coming season. Chris Leech has put a lot of thought into the scheme and directed us to the best source of interested and skilled young people, the Sea Scouts.

A meeting with the Auckland Area Sea Scout leaders was held on 19th October. As a result, we are already receiving solid interest from several Auckland Sea Scout troops, both from boys and leaders, who themselves are mainly skilled boatmen. It is now over to us to open up our boats to these young people and to provide them with additional hands-on skills on the water. Joyce Talbot will be circulating all members shortly to draw up a manning roster for the Sea Dogs. Please respond to this promptly. Just think of the benefit of an extra couple of eager hands for the throat and peak halliards, or someone keen on the foredeck of your launch to help in picking up your mooring! The Committee warmly recommends this scheme to CYA members as the way of the future for the CYA.

Harold Kidd



seemed to be half underwater a lot of the time, presented a scene reminiscent of some kind of waterfall diorama due to the torrents of water entering through leaking hatches and deck fittings all over our nice dry gear.

The squabs that we were to sleep on after our day's ordeal were soon wet to the point of saturation with bags of clothes and food suffering the same fate (apart from mine due to my completely waterproof bag purchased after unpleasant experiences on Jonquil)

Quite alarmingly, we also noticed the electric bilge pump activating frequently. The ship was taking quite a pounding, but slowly we gained confidence in her and actually started to enjoy ourselves to a degree even though we were beset by rain and severe squalls throughout the day when the extremely nasty looking and frequent anvil shaped clouds passed overhead.

The night was spent sheltering behind Rabbit Island off Tairua attempting to dry our wet gear by draping it over strategic parts of the engine. Amazingly one of the crewmembers had the foresight to buy warehouse plastic sheets (not too sure what he had in mind there) so we ended up sleeping in relative comfort even though all of the squabs had basically become wet sponges.

The following day brought much the same weather, but we were still able to admire the stunning sight of the Coromandel coastline in winter, confident that though our vessel leaked somewhat, we stood a fair chance of actually making it back. The bilge pump was still

At this stage the crew's fortitude and enthusiasm was beginning to wane due to the unpleasant fact that it was winter and everything was drenched ... and our ship was sinking ...

activating fairly regularly and a thorough inspection on the bilge revealed a multitude of almost cartoon like fountains but most alarmingly in the bow, two solid streams probably equivalent together to a tap half turned on. We kept close tabs on this and found that it wasn't really getting worse so remained in quite high spirits.

On this day we were treated to the amazing sight of a huge pod of dolphins that convened under our bow from what seemed like miles around and from different directions until there was a very tight ball off them numbering perhaps 100 that you could actually reach over the side and touch. They stayed with us for quite a time.[ED references to spearguns expurgated]..

The second night was spent at Little Bay further up the Coromandel coast, but at this stage the crew's fortitude and enthusiasm was beginning to wane due to the unpleasant fact that it was winter and everything was drenched, plus things hadn't quite panned out to be the pleasant little convivial coastal cruise that we had envisaged and our ship was sinking. So, on the third day, we decided that there was no way that any of us could bear to spend another night aboard and made the choice to get home that day regardless of how long it took.

This unfortunately involved tacking against the

SW wind (which at least had dropped down to around 30 knots) the whole way home after rounding the peninsula. We set off at the sensible hour of 7:00 am so as to be back by nightfall. Bringing her onto the wind seemed to aggravate the leak and we noticed with some apprehension that the bilge pump was now on more often than off, so it seemed prudent to get her out of the chop as soon as possible. We opted to cut through the Waiheke channel, then hug the coast back to Auckland.

Somehow, however, dusk came and we were still only off the bottom end of Waiheke after a painful day of tacking when the bilge pump, which was at this stage going continuously, burnt out. We discovered this when the floorboards started floating.

I was steering at this stage, but I was freezing cold and attempting to think of valid reasons to be down below. But, suddenly, being up there seemed substantially more appealing faced with the other option of bailing all the way back to Auckland. Swiftly, the proud owners formed a two-man chain gang bailing fairly continuously, the task made all the more unpleasant by the fact that the engine as it transpired had been pumping diesel into the bilge when running, forming a bad slick.

As they commenced their task, there was soon large amounts of diesel covering most of our gear, the floor;

which became slippery as ice providing moments of comedy for those of us on deck, and the bailers themselves. I spared a thought for the owner of the expensive gortex wet weather gear lent to one of the bailers, which was now completely soaked in diesel.

To make matters worse, the wind had now ironically died significantly but the engine couldn't be used at all which meant that the poor bailers had about nine hours before we finally pulled into Westhaven at 3:00am.

This didn't mean bedtime though, we now started running round Auckland sorting out spare pumps and float switches and wiring them in. I left the owners to it eventually – poor Ryan who had just been bailing for nine hours must have been yearning for his crisp cotton sheets.

Soon after her arrival in Auckland, Galatea was hauled out at Okahu bay and the source of our troubles discovered. A couple of sections of her forward seams must have spat their caulking when we ran her into the mudbank. The new owners, being fairly meticulous types, ended up completely removing her fairly tired caulking from the keel to the waterline, replacing it all over the next month.

Thanks to their efforts, Galatea is now as tight as a drum and can frequently be seen plying the waters of the Hauraki Gulf, or happily tucked up in a sunny bay, usually with a set of fenders inexplicably tied down one side, a hastily dropped jib hanging in the water and the sweet smell of sizzlers emanating from the galley below.

Auckland Traditional Boatbuilding School Trust

By Harold Kidd

As you probably saw in Robin Bailey's article in the New Zealand Herald of 21st October, we've at last gone public on the details of the opening of the School. The four trustees, Ron Jamieson, Robert Brooke, Bruce Tantrum and Harold Kidd have put in a truck-load of work to get to this point.

On the initiative of the CYA, the Trust was formed late last year, the courses were designed, the premises at Hobsonville were found, and they are currently being fitted out.

On top of that, we are now well down the track to registration as a Private Training Organization (PTE), getting NZQA approval of the courses and TEC funding of those courses.

Education Director Robert Brooke has developed a series of courses to provide traditional boatbuilding skills to a wide variety of students, lads and lasses straight from school and mid-life re-trainees on a full-time basis, and part-timers.

They will have tailor-made courses from weekends to several weeks for specific tasks, like lofting and building a clinker dinghy from scratch, boat maintenance and boat handling.

The 8000 sq ft school premises are simply amazing. A block of Air Force barracks built for the New Zealand



Permanent Air Force in 1938, it has a significant place in history of its own as many of the New Zealand airmen who fought in World War Two and subsequent CMT airmen have lived within its walls.

We like to think that the shade of John Spencer is with us here! Maybe Cherub was designed here while he was in CMT?

There is a huge lofting floor, a workshop that will easily handle a 35ft keel yacht, a full administration set up, well-appointed lecture and study rooms, a library that is already filling up with books, and pictures of classic yachts everywhere.

Full-time courses will commence in January 2007.

• Ring Ron Jamieson (09 521 3553) or Robert Brooke (09 411 9945),



or e-mail ronjamieson@xtra.co.nz if you want to help, to donate gear, tools, wood, time or money, or have someone interested in attending a course.

Top: Outside the School are from left Harold Kidd, Elizabeth Brooke, Robert Brooke, Peter Kerr, Sam Anstiss, Ron Jamieson, Sheryl Jamieson and Bruce Tantrum, Jessie Logan behind, Libby, the first Sea Dog, couchante. Above: The four Trustees opening up for the big workshop, Bruce Tantrum, Harold Kidd, Robert Brooke and Ron Jamieson.

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