

Flicka Friends

Spring 2002



Vol. 7, No. 1



2002 Spring Rendezvous Schedule



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- Isthmus Rendezvous Report?
- Blake Island Rendezvous Report?
- **HELP! The files are empty! We could use you help for the summer issue of Flicka Friends.**

Cover Photo

s/y WINDFIDDLER (#373)
on Seneca Lake in New York State.
Photo by Tom Foster

If you have a high quality photo of your Flicka and would like to see it on the cover, please let me know.

flickafriends@coslink.net

From the Editor

By Tom Davison

In January, my internet service provider (ISP) experienced problems which resulted in their local internet telephone number being disconnected. They blamed everything on the telephone company who blamed everything on the ISP. This left me with two options: pay long distance charges for internet access or change to another provider. Since the first option is too expensive, I opted to go with the second. After a week, I pulled the plug and went shopping.

Changing to another ISP was easy, but moving the Flicka Home Page took some time. The new address meant that each of the many links on the 250+ pages needed updating. While not difficult when compared to creating the web pages last June, it does take effort. It will take some time for the Flicka Home Page's new location to be recognized by search engines. On the plus side, several technical improvements will be made.

Back Issues

Over the last nine months or so, some of the back issues of Flicka Friends have been converted to Adobe Acrobat PDF format. The software to read the files is free and can be downloaded from the internet. The best part is that the newsletter is a color original and not a black & white photocopy.

This conversion process is continuing and should be completed by the end of summer. The table to the right shows which ones have been converted so far. There are a few of the original photos that are not available. Hopefully, most of the back issues can be recreated and converted from the original images.

Future issues will be available in Adobe Acrobat PDF format.

Flicka Friends Back Issues		
Issue	Year/Season	PDF
2002		
Vol. 7, # 1	Spring 2002	YES
2001		
Vol. 6, # 4	Winter	YES
Vol. 6, # 3	Fall	YES
Vol. 6, # 2	Summer	YES
Vol. 6, # 1	Spring	YES
2000		
Vol. 5, # 4	Winter	YES
Vol. 5, # 3	Fall	YES
Vol. 5, # 2	Summer	NO
Vol. 5 # 1	Spring	YES
1998/9		
Vol. 4, # 4	Winter	YES
Vol. 4, # 3	Fall	YES
Vol. 4, # 2	Summer	NO
Vol. 4, # 1	Spring	YES
1997		
Vol. 3, # 4	Winter	NO
Vol. 3, # 3	Fall	NO
Vol. 3, # 2	Summer	NO
Vol. 3, # 1	Spring	NO
1996		
Vol. 2, # 3	Winter	NO
Vol. 2, # 2	Fall	NO
Vol. 2, # 1	Summer	NO
Vol. 1, # 4	Spring	NO
1995		
Vol. 1, # 3	Winter	NO
Vol. 1, # 2	Fall	NO
Vol. 1, # 1	Summer	NO





Flicka Rendezvous Schedule



Charlie Dewell standing on the bow of s/y KAWABUNGA in Isthmus Cove on Santa Catalina Island during the 1997 Flicka Rendezvous.

N.P.S.O.A. Spring Rendezvous

When:	April 27 & 28, 2002
Where:	Blake Island State Park , Washington
Contact:	Jim & Debbie Custer jcuster@us.dhl.com www.coslink.net/personal/flickafriends/rendezvous/npsoa-02.html



Six Flickas, two Danas, and a Pacific Seacraft 25 anchored in Garrison Bay in the San Juan Islands, Washington.

ISTHMUS COVE RENDEZVOUS

When:	May 17,18, & 19, 2002
Where:	Isthmus Cove, Santa Catalina Island, California
Contact:	Tony & Diane de WITTE svmerlin@aol.com (949) 481-6148 www.bluewatercruisers.com www.coslink.net/personal/flickafriends/rendezvous/isthmus-01.html

About Flicka Friends

Flicka Friends is a newsletter written for the people who own, crew aboard or are interested in the Flicka, a 20 foot sailing vessel designed by Bruce P. Bingham.

Based on the Newport boats of Block Island Sound, this little ship has been built from various materials from the 1970's until 2002. This includes Flickas constructed from plans obtained directly from Bruce's California office. About 400 sets of plans were sold. According to Bruce Bingham, many Flickas can be found in New Zealand Australia and Sweden.

A number of hulls were built by Nor'star and some were completed by Westerly Marine. The manufacturer of the bulk of the class is Pacific Seacraft Corporation who built 434 hulls in California.

Flicka Friends is published on a quarterly basis, with issues being mailed in March, June, September and December. Articles, letters, comments and photos relating to the Flicka are welcomed and encouraged.

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s/y WINDFIDDLER

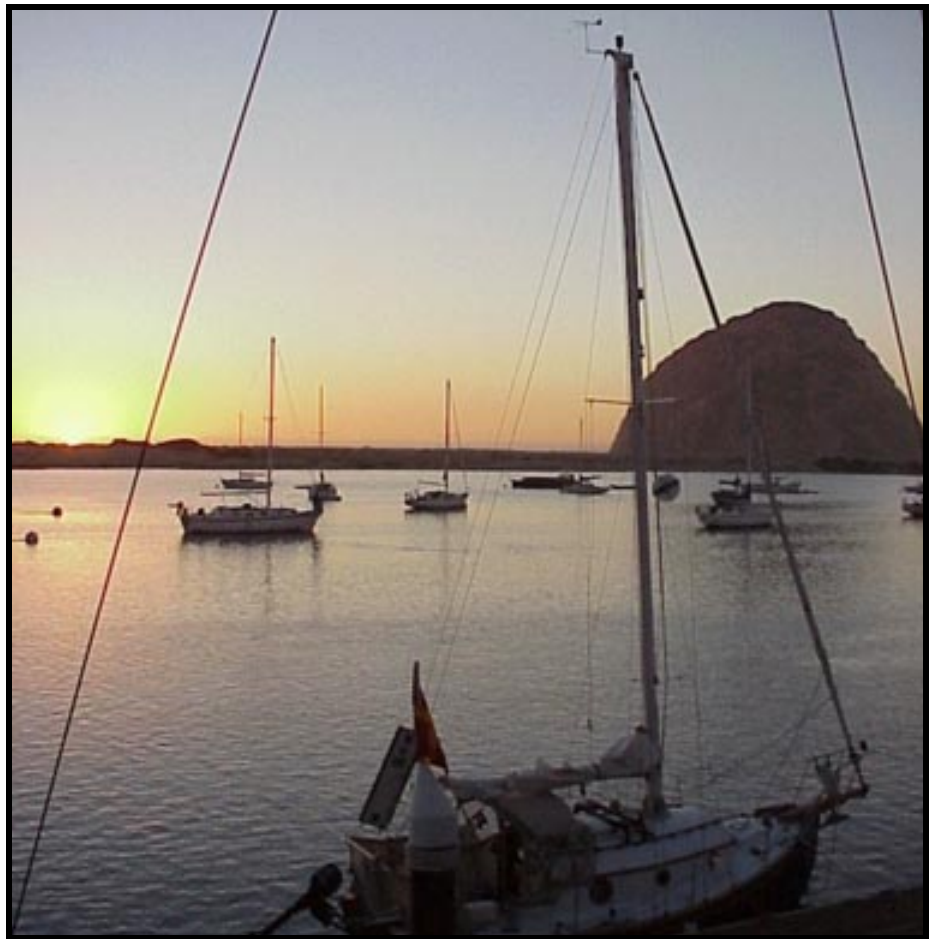


All of these photos are of s/y WINDFIDDLER, Tom Foster's Pacific Seacraft Flicka (#373). He sails on Seneca Lake in New York State.





s/y MOTU Sails South



Photos from Ed Melinn's trip south from San Francisco Bay to Morro Bay, California.

TOP: s/y MOTU at San Simeon.

TOP: s/y MOTU and the
RIGHT Golden Gate Bridge.

ABOVE: s/y MOTU ready for launch in San Francisco Bay.

RIGHT: s/y MOTU docked in Morro Bay, California.





The Last Voyage of Solar Wind

By Jobst Vandrey

At the end of June, I had moved Solar Wind into dry storage using the facilities of Driftwood Marina located at the eastern edge of Marathon. This was a nice safe location with low storage rates so I was pleased. Unfortunately, the approach is from the Atlantic side requiring a long passage up a residential channel and the depths at low tide are marginal - especially at the channel entrance. Now, in mid October, I was ready to sail again.

I planned to have Solar Wind splashed on the 15th of October which would coincide with the extreme tides associated with a full moon. I was able to tie up dockside at the travel lift's slip during the night and transfer all my required equipment aboard during the afternoon and evening. Then, with a high tide at a reasonable hour on the morning of the 16th, I was all set. I had arranged to have Driftwood store my car for the next month and made my way out to sea via the long channel. At high tide, this was a nice and easy trip - I had the depth gauge running but never saw soundings less than 5 feet.

Once out in the open sea, I turned south and raised sail in about 10 knots of breeze. The forecast called for 10 to 15 knots easterly for the next two days with winds increasing thereafter to 20 to 25 knots with small craft warnings. I figured on a nice peaceful sail all the way to Key west where I was due to meet Bill Buchanan who was about three days ahead of me on the same schedule with his Flicka S/Y "EASY GOING". The plan was that Bill and I would sail our two Flickas in the Key West general area and also take in the sights during the late October bash called Fantasy Fest.

I planned an easy first day shakedown sail with a stop in the anchorage of Bahia Honda State Park. This worked like a champ and I was the only boat in the anchorage. This cove is completely open from north to south with a nasty tidal current. The only real protection is from the prevailing easterlies. Since Mr. Murphy is my constant crew mate, the predicted northerly winds came in ahead of schedule during the night and things turned ugly. Whitecaps in the anchorage is never a good thing but I rode it out for three days waiting for the conditions to change.

When things finally did calm down, I sailed on to Key west and arrived in the harbor by late afternoon. Key West has many cruise ships that dock there and this was no exception. However, now that the Coast Guard was on harbor patrol due to the terrorist threat, an exclusion zone was set up around all the cruise liners. The net effect was a requirement to call the patrol boat and receive permission to transit the harbor



Launching s/v *SOLAR WIND*

outside of their 100 yard zone - which meant using the western edge of the marked channel.

After transiting the harbor entrance, I called Bill on the VHF and anchored near his location. It turned out that our sailing plans needed some modification since Bill had engine





WOW! What a sunset!

problems and would need to get repairs before heading out. While things were calm the next few days, we arranged to remove his outboard and take it ashore for repair. We even got it re-installed before the next norther hit with 20 to 25 knot winds.

Key West anchorage has several locations suitable for small boats. I prefer the area north of Flemming Key Cut and will tuck in as close to Flemming Key as conditions allow. This leaves me outside of any major currents and with some protection from the winds. The bottom is sandy and offers fair holding to my Bruce or Fortress anchors with depths running from 10 to 20 feet. I rig these anchors on 100 feet of chain and use the Bruce when I plan on being there for more than two days or when winds are higher than average.

In Key West, things were starting to heat up for Fantasy Fest so I did avail myself of the services of the local water taxi for the ride in to shore. At \$5 a ride, this is a bargain since the dinghy dock is generally very crowded and costs about \$6 per day. The water taxi does not have a fixed schedule but will pick up individuals on call (use VHF Channel 16 and hail Magic

Penny - they'll switch you to their current working channel). Their rate does increase for long trips to outlying anchorage points and all trips after 11 PM.

As Fantasy Fest weekend started to heat up, a bit of trouble started to brew to the south with a strong tropical Low forming over the tip of South America and a high pressure system stalling over the southern US. The pressure difference between these two strong systems caused northerly winds to build and remain steady at 20 to 25 knots continuously. When occasional squalls blew thru, winds picked up to 35 knots and gusty. The storm fronts produced numerous water spouts for the next few days with as many as four spouts visible south of the Key West anchorage simultaneously.

Conditions remained very unfavorable for easy sailing for the remainder of October so I stayed at anchor in Key West. Boats of 45 foot LOA that tried to leave for the west coast of Florida returned after only a few hours. They reported seas of 7 to 9 feet in the Gulf of Mexico and turned back to the anchorage as fast as they could. A flotilla of 40 foot

power boats that attempted to leave via the Atlantic side for the run to Marathon also returned with reports of high winds and steep short choppy conditions.

By the of 29th of October, the low pressure system was officially designated Tropical Depression 14. The National Hurricane Center reported it to be nearly stationary over Nicaragua and producing heavy rains. Late on the 31st of October this system had moved over open water and became Tropical Storm Michelle. To say the least, the local conditions had not improved. I was comfortable in my current location and only became concerned when the anchorage became more crowded and some boats appeared to be closer to me than I liked to see. The advance forecasts now began to predict further strengthening of this storm system with the eventual formation of a hurricane. This system was projected to move northward and then turn easterly as it approached the Keys. The storm track was questionable with a large error, but a direct hit on Key West was in the 20 percent probability. Also, the storm was projected to grow in intensity to a possible category 4 with 140 MPH winds.

By the 2nd of November, a hit on the Keys was more than a possibility and preparations for evacuation became real. My plan was to tie the boat down as best as possible and head to a hotel on shore to ride out the storm. While this worked as planned, the Keys emergency authorities had other ideas. On the morning of the 3rd, they ordered a mandatory evacuation of all visitors from the Keys. This meant that the hotels would close by the early afternoon and I would be on the street.

At this point, my transportation choices were drastically limited since my car was still at Driftwood Marina in Marathon - about 60 miles away. There was a late afternoon evening bus from Key West with a stop in Marathon, but the marina would be

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locked up tight by then. My only choice was to get a cab (yes - VERY EXPENSIVE) for the trip and then use my car to get out of the area. At least this way, I would protect my car from a possible flood since a strong storm surge could cover Marathon with a few feet of salt water. I made it to Marathon in time to pick up my car and then drove about 100 miles north to clear any possible storm track.

By November 4th, the Keys emergency authority had ordered a mandatory evacuation of the Keys residents (widely ignored by the locals). The storm was now a category 4 and would definitely hit western Cuba with 140 MPH winds and a possible storm surge of 20 feet. The strike probability for the Keys became more confused since it would depend on how the storm was affected by the Cuba crossing.

As it turned out, the storm turned east and gained significant speed in crossing the coast of Cuba. This moved the storm track southerly into the Florida straits and Key West was left on the northern edge of the system as it passed by in the early morning hours of the 5th. In fact, the eastern Keys were affected more than Key West due to the revised track. As I was 100 miles north, I drove back and reached Key West in the early afternoon of the 5th of November. On reaching the docks, I was approached by the water taxi owner who stated that he had just salvaged my boat.

I was told that a 46 foot Ketch had dragged her anchor and was leaning all over my Flicka in the North wind. The taxi owner had cut my anchor rode and dragged Solar Wind to a new location. I was taken to my boat to survey the damage and I can only say that a collision between a 46 footer and a 20 footer does not leave a pretty picture.

While the damage to the rigging was extensive, the hull appeared to have only suffered cosmetic damage. The bowsprit was broken in half, the stanchions were bent, the life lines were broken, the pulpit was collapsed and the bimini was collapsed. One chain plate was broken so the upper shrouds were loose but the mast was supported by the fore and aft lowers. I tied the jib halyard off to the deck cleat to regain some tension on the back stays and relieve the excessive tension on the lower shrouds. The cabin interior had suffered no damage and there was no sign of any water leaks.

The next two days were a blur of activity since my responsibility was to ensure that no further damage occurred. On contacting the insurance company, I was placed in touch with a local adjuster who gave me the name of a repair yard on Stock Island that I could start with in getting a repair estimate. I interviewed the yard owner and went over what I thought would be required and agreed to have the boat hauled out there as soon as possible. That turned out to be the following day since I had determined that the engine would not start and I needed to get Tow Boat US to tow me from the anchorage to Stock Island.



The bow pulpit was folded aft.

In the process of removing the mast, it became evident to the rigger that all standing rigging would have to be replaced since more than 6 of the turnbuckles were damaged beyond repair and all but the aft chain plates showed some stress damage. Completing the list of required repairs, and having the insurance adjuster do a walk thru took another two days. Another three weeks was spent getting a final estimate of the repair costs and waiting for the adjuster to finish the paper work - including a claim of salvage charges from the water taxi owner.

Finally, after about 45 days, the insurance company had all of the paper work and determined that since the repair estimate was almost as high as the insured value of the boat, my claim would be treated as a "constructive total loss". This is a fancy way of saying they wanted to pay me off and then recover some of their money by auctioning the boat at a good price to a new owner as a refit project. Not a bad guess since by this time there had been more than 6 inquiries by people wanting to buy the boat on an "As is Where is" basis.

A few words about the Insurance Process

Going into this situation, the marine insurance claim process was a mystery to me. I had dealt with one small auto claim before and the result was an immediate settlement. In fact, the adjuster wrote out a repair check on the spot and provided a list of repair shops that would do the work for the settlement price. In this case, things were very different.

My insurance was acquired via West Marine who uses St. Paul Marine as the underwriter. The insurance is of a type





The rigging and aft pulpit were also destroyed.

(Continued from page 8)

called "agreed value" where loss coverage is limited to the face insurance amount minus any deductible. The adjusters used by St. Paul are independent business operations and act as agents for the company. In my case, the adjuster indicated that he was prohibited from recommending any yard to do the repairs. Only after considerable discussion, he did give me one name as a starting point for my search. It turned out that in this process, I was on my own hook and would need to do most of the leg work myself.

The interview of the repair yard owner went smoothly and I was especially impressed by the independent rigger who would do that refit. I was also lucky in making the arrangements to get the boat hauled almost immediately since the yard was very busy. However, at this point, the claim process slowed to a crawl. Once the adjuster saw the boat, he immediately suggested that this would be a total loss. He explained that an insurance company will usually write a boat off as a constructive total loss if the repair estimate is more than 80 percent of the insured value. The process would end with the boat being sold to the highest bidder on an "As Is Where Is" basis.

While I was not ready to write Solar Wind off so easily, the words "Constructive Total Loss" had a significant impact on the repair folks since they might not get any work out of this. In order to get things moving, I agreed to pay for any time required in the estimate process. I also produced a master list of all required replacement equipment items along with their estimated cost. Since many more boats were coming into the yard for hurricane repairs, my final estimate took three weeks to generate.

The outboard engine had been removed and sent to a local Honda dealer for a repair estimate. Apparently, the boat yard

and the Honda dealer were not on the best of terms and no information about engine repairs could be provided. Since the insurance adjuster could not complete the claim until the engine repair estimate was complete, I acted as intermediary and determined that the only detected engine damage was from water in the carburetor which was corrected when the motor was treated for preservation.

The combination of repair estimate delays, the misunderstandings over the engine, end of year holidays, and a two week vacation by the adjuster combined to stretch out the entire process. However, by the first week of January, I had confirmation that Solar Wind would be treated as a total loss by the insurance company.

The follow-up documentation consisted of signing some necessary forms with a notary stamp required and completing the papers to sign the title over to the insurance company. Once this was complete, I could contact the boat yard and transfer the responsibility for storage costs on **SOLAR WIND** (\$8 per day) to the adjuster. Then it was only a matter of waiting two days for the check to arrive.

In the entire process of about 70 days, St. Paul Insurance was always prompt and efficient. Their internal claims representative was on the ball and followed up as necessary. The independent adjuster seemed to have more work going on than he could handle and the boat yard seemed to be less than eager to move things along since they would not be making any money off the boat.

Conclusion

It was evident to me that the complete repair of Solar Wind would not be economic at boat yard labor rates - at least not at the rates charged in Key West. I considered buying the boat back after the settlement and then moving the boat back to St. Louis where I could do the repairs myself. Some people also advised me to do only minimal repairs and sail the boat as is - but that is something I just could not do - repairs would be all or nothing.

However, the cost of truck transport and the real costs of the repair parts were still significant even if I did not count my labor hours. I did complete a repair estimate for my own use that was based on prices from Pacific Seacraft and West Marine. Based on that, I made one offer to buy the boat back myself, but that bid was lower than others had already offered. While I have never received confirmation, at this point, I hope Solar Wind has moved on to a new owner who will completely repair her and enjoy sailing a Flicka.

**Thanks to Jobst Vandrey for allowing
Flicka Friends to print his story.
You can find his web page at:
www.pocketyacht.com**





A Recovering Large Boat Owner



"ENSO"
Classic 1980 Pacific Seacraft Flicka20
(never sunk)

s/y ENSO: PS#149 (1980) - sloop/marconi; outboard power (factory); no factory head - very good condition. Known to have been operated/ owned in Ohio, Florida and Tennessee. Currently berthed on the Pungo River at Belhaven, NC (Dowry Creek Marina) off Pamlico Sound. Likes 10-25 knot. winds, any point of sail.

By Dan Nathan

I am a recovering large boat owner. My name is Dan. I've gone 317 days without getting on a big boat.

A few years ago I gave up inboard diesel, built in air/heat, head, mile-high mast, propane stove/oven/regulator/relay (another topic - the Origo alky stove - boils slow but always works, won't explode and doesn't need a propane tank), high-aspect fin keel and the once coveted stainless steel destroyer wheel steering (boy, there's a topic for you - "In praise of the tiller and transom-hung rudder - or, one moving part vs. the quadrant, wheel, through-hull rudder post, cables, pulleys, screws, nuts, bolts, bearings..... all waiting for one thing to go — **snap** — on a stormy night creating your worst nightmare").

Yes, I am a recovering large boat owner. Sold it all for a little Flicka, 10

hp outboard, portable air conditioning (stays in the dock box except on muggy nights) and a stout little trailer. The outboard quit the other day and I rediscovered the pleasure of landing a boat under sail on a nasty day. All the yachties were standing around gawking like some kind of miracle of seamanship had transpired. I felt like Captain Bligh coming in from 3,000 miles in an open boat.

Guess what? I haven't enjoyed 25 knots of wind (single-handed) more in 25 years. I love a pocket yacht! Plenty of room for a weekend or a month, with spouse, all the gear you need, and the worries stay at some other guy's slip.

You know the slip I mean - the Catalina 34 that leaves the dock about 4 times a season because it's too much boat for one fellow to handle if he wants a Saturday on the water under sail. Or, as any marina owner will tell

you, about 90% of the boats at his dock. Oh yes, here's another topic for you: I can scrub a 20' deck with a toothbrush in less than half the time it took to clean the trophy yacht with a long-handled scrub brush. Small boats clean up fast, eh? I am a developing snob, me, with the shortest mast in the harbor.

Do you know that people walk past a Hinckley to stare at a Flicka? They all say, "It's SO cute and salty looking. My, it IS spacious below for such a tiny little boat!"

And they think it is fine as long as there isn't too much wind. I don't explain that I am much more comfortable in the Flicka in 35 knots than I was in the Pearson in 25 knots. She don't go "bang—bang—bang" clawing windward in a steep chop; and there is something comforting, reassuring maybe, about a full keel when the whitecaps are multiplying.

So, the Flicka is a wonderful sailer, lots of room to stand up or store gear; fast and fair-handling, for a full keeled vessel; plows through 3-4' Pamlico Sound square chop close-hauled without a bump or a bang; can sail the oceans of the world and ride out a hurricane - or day sail like a champ of a sunny Sunday.

I speak well of the Flicka, and all those nice "little" boats that let one enjoy sailing and leave a lot of the worries behind. You are right about the simplicity of sailing. It is easy to get lost in pursuit of the wrong things, no matter what we do. Sailing can be infinitely enjoyable - if you keep it simple.

**Worries increase in
geometric proportion to
complexity + displacement.**

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www.pocketcruisers.com

