

- **Need an EPIRB for an Ocean Voyage?**

Rent one from Boat/US. A 406 MHz satellite linked EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon) would cost a minimum of \$800. That is a lot to pay if you only need it for a short time! What to do? Rent it. When activated the EPIRB broadcasts a repeating signal to a series of earth orbiting satellites that relay critical information to rescue stations. If activated before leaving port, the EPIRB signal is encoded to carry an identifying code that will give rescuers a description of the vessel and an emergency contact on land. Eight participating BOAT/US Marine Centers are offering a full emergency kit containing a 406-MHz EPIRB, Global Positioning System (GPS) unit, VHF radio and two SOLAS-approved flares for \$35 a week. These rentals are offered for a maximum of six weeks.

For reservations and information call
888-66-EPIRB (37472)

Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. EDT
or visit a participating Marine Center:

Annapolis, MD	410-573-5744
Brick, NJ	908-477-9661
Charleston, SC	803-763-6360
Detroit, MI	810-939-5050
Fairhaven, MA (opening May 17)	508-992-8484
Ft. Lauderdale, FL	954-523-7993
Marina del Rey, CA	310-391-1180
San Diego, CA	619-276-6852

(Reminder: Our US members can join BOAT/US for only \$7.50 a year instead of the regular price of \$15.00. Sid has the necessary forms.)

- **"Old Ironsides" sails again**

The USS Constitution, the oldest commissioned warship afloat recently sailed again - the first time in 116 years. A U.S. Navy crew had been training aboard the square rigged replica H.M.S. Bounty. "My ship ("Constitution") makes the "Bounty" look like a toy" said one Constitution crew member. The old ship saw quite a lot of action in her time. In separate 42 engagements, "old Ironsides" never lost a battle. It took a crew of 450 to sail the 44 gun frigate which carried 42,710 square feet of sails (36 sails). Way back when your editor was in 1st or 2nd grade, millions of school children contributed pennies to help keep the ship afloat. The ship was last sailed in 1881. (The next oldest US warship, the U.S.S. Constellation" in Baltimore MD is having trouble staying afloat. It was used as a major U.S. Navy headquarters during World War II).

- **America's Cup 2000 race**

Although the race is still several years away, the number of challengers has now reached a new high. Early filers include the United States, France, Italy, Switzerland, Great Britain, France Hong Kong, Japan, Russia and Spain - a total of 18 syndicates from 10 countries. So far five teams from the US and one team from the US Virgin Islands plan to enter the competition. Dennis Connor will lead one of the U.S. teams.

- **Whitbread Cup Race**

The 1997-1998 Whitbread around the world race will have nine legs including two stopovers in the United States (Fort Lauderdale and Baltimore/Annapolis). Three U.S. teams are now sailing or building boats for the competition.



Wow! Do I have parts (and parts) for sale!

Dear Sid,

I find in my inventory the following assortment of Vega stuff. I believe that all of it is original equipment. Some of it is from Lyric, built in 1967, the rest is from Sonia, built in 1975. This accounts for the difference in old and new parts. I have no idea when the various changes were made. Obviously I can't guarantee that a particular item will fit a particular year. If anyone is interested please contact me. We are getting close to cruising and it will be very difficult to contact us after we're out of here. The prices listed include shipping when it is reasonable. Lyric's old bow pulpit sold for \$150.00 and went to the east coast. Because it was oversized the rates quoted for shipping were around \$140.00! (I was able to have a friend ship it on a corporate account for about half that price.) The track sections and bow tank would obviously be oversized and it would be best if they sold out here. All proceeds from the sales of the following items will be donated to a fund being established to help poor Lyric obtain a liferaft.

Deck Fills: Water/Vatten \$10. Bransle/Fuel \$10. Bransle/Fuel with built in key \$15. Halyard winch \$100. Sheet winches, fixed bottom handle, outboard wrapping for starboard and port. \$50. each. Teak ring cleats (2) \$15. each. Bronze fairleads (3 pair) sandblasted \$10. a pair. Rudder shoe with multiple layers of bottom paint \$100. Rudder upper bronze bushing \$40. Plastic bow water tank. \$100. Copper gas tank (approx. 6 gal). \$100. Diesel bilge tank. \$100. (bilge design was changed, later models have a deeper and wider bilge. If you can reach down and touch the bottom of the sump its the old style and this tank may not fit.) Combi shaft and prop. Mostly complete. \$400. Albin 7/8" shaft and 13x8 LH prop \$150. Turnbuckles (open body) new style (3/8" clevis pin) \$10. each. Turnbuckles (closed body) old style (5/16" clevis pin) \$10. each. Stem/forestay fitting (new style) \$50. Track sections \$200. Large mast cleats 4 (one has been sand blasted) \$10 each. Small mast cleats 2 (old style, legs fit flush with mast, new style raises the cleat slightly and has a different screw pattern) \$10 each. Teak Companionway slides port and starboard \$15. Each. Cockpit Vent cover (sand blasted) \$10. Mast tang (old but heavier duty than the newer ones) \$15. Voltage regulator (2) one from the Albin on Lyric & one from the Volvo on Sonia, appear identical.. \$10 each.

If anyone is interested in trading, I'm looking for a 150 Genoa or a Drifter. I also have Sonia's old Volvo and am willing to part it out at half of replacement cost.

Judy came up with a brilliant idea for mounting our Trawler lamp. She brought home some stainless steel 5/8" sail track. We attached two pieces running fore and aft to the inside of the cabin overhead with 1/2" roundhead sheet metal screws. Each piece starts a couple of inches aft of the overhead cutout at the companionway and just outboard of same. They run forward to the front of the cabin. The lamp is attached by means of a split ring and two pieces of brass chain. Sail stops on the track keep it from sliding and allow it to be positioned just about anywhere in the cabin. CAUTION! Don't allow one of these lamps to get too close to the overhead as they do put out a considerable amount of heat!

It's my sad duty to report the sale of yet another Vega for a price considerably less than they are worth. "Nimrod", Hull # 1248 has just been sold to Steve and Linda Golly for the price of \$700.00. No I didn't leave out a zero. The boat has an Albin and will at the very least be needing a shaft, prop, transmission and some other stuff. Steve and Linda are no strangers to boating. They've done a cruise to Fiji on a Hans Christian they used to own and have just placed on the market a Chinook 34 that they've rebuilt. The work done on the Chinook can only be described as impeccable. The Vega will actually be for their son, they're hoping to move off of the Chinook and onto an 85 ft Schooner built in 1923. I have the pleasure of having Linda as a co-worker. Many of you have already seen a picture of Steve. Remember when the Apollo spaceship came back from the Moon? Life magazine had a front page picture of several Navy divers attaching a floatation collar to the capsule. Steve was one of the divers.



Walt Brown
660 Bair Island Rd.
Box 45
Redwood City, CA 94063
(415) 364-7823

Sailing the St. Lawrence

(Part 2 of 2 parts)



In part one of Nick & Jenny Coghlan's trip, they were sailing "Tarka the Otter" from the Thousand Islands (the Eastern extremity of Lake Ontario) to the Gulf of St. Lawrence and had spent the night anchored off the village of Grondines, the most westerly tidal station on the St. Lawrence River.

- - - - -

On to Quebec City, surely the most spectacular city in North America. But we couldn't linger - the loss of our mainsail, the delay at Grondines and the fact that the most favourable tides were now in the middle of the night (when we were not prepared to sail....) was putting us behind schedule. Two expensive nights at the Yacht Club de Sillery, just upstream from the old City and we were off again, spanking new and dazzlingly white mainsail installed.

In the space of thirty miles we had gone from 1 foot tides to 20 foot tides and there were still no anchorages. If you enter the small marina at the South end of Ile d'Orleans, you seem to be in a normal sort of marina, with breakwaters of broken rock rising six or eight feet out of the water. But if you look out of the companionway at low water, it's hard not to be claustrophobic: the walls are nearly 30 feet high!

Every six hours or so, from now on, we would have a favourable window for sailing downstream, before the tide overcame the current and turned a favourable current into a three knot flood we would have to fight. This led to much pouring over the tide tables and departures at odd hours - of course, it always seemed that when the current was at its most favourable, the wind backed to easterly! But, when everything went right we had spectacular sailing: running along the remote, wooded and mountainous North Shore of this part of Quebec, with fifteen knots of wind behind us, three knots of current with us, and bright blue skies with not another boat to be seen.

The destination we had set for ourselves was the Saguenay River, a true fjord that branches off the St. Lawrence's North Shore at right angles and reaches far into the heartland of Quebec. The Saguenay recalls the inlets of British Columbia - rarely more than a mile across, its steeply wooded sides rise to several thousand feet above sea level and are home to an astonishing variety of sea life - off or in the Saguenay are to be found Blue Whales, Minke Whales and, most famous of all, the only colony of white Beluga whales to be found outside the arctic. The reason for this is the confluence of the deep and cold fresh waters of the Saguenay with the warmer salt water of the St. Lawrence over a shallow shelf at the Saguenay's entrance - the resultant turbulence and upwellings turn this into the greatest whale feeding ground in the world.

But the Saguenay is not so easy of access. At this time of year (July) the entrance is fog bound for fifty percent of the time. There are wide and dangerous shoals either side of the entrance, and sudden and unpredictable winds frequently barrel out of the fjord on cloudless days, at fifty knots or more. Then of course there's the current. You need to approach the fjord on the ebb in the St. Lawrence, just in time to catch the flood up into the Saigon. Ten minutes out either way, and it would be (in our case) eight hours until the next opportunity.. As we were coming from the last available anchorage, and this was ten miles upstream, it was not surprising that we got things wrong, arriving about fifteen minutes late, with an eight knot current impeding our approach to Tadoussac, the small village at the fjord's entrance. Fortunately, it was a calm, sunny day - we anchored on a thirty foot shoal two miles off Tadoussac and watched the whales all day.

At eight in the evening, pulling up the anchor in six knots of current was an experience all of its own and we had a frantic against darkness and the current, checking our watches every minute or so and trying to gauge the direction and strength of the current at every leaning buoy we painfully put behind us. I think we put Tarkas's 23 year old diesel harder than ever before, and we could almost feel the sigh with relief as

we inched into Tadoussac's tiny marina an hour after sunset.

Tadoussac is the whale watching capital of Eastern Canada and it will be familiar to anyone who watched "The Hotel New Hampshire" - the grand red and white Hotel Tadoussac has the starring role. But tourists were surprisingly few and far between; spectacular television footage of floods on the upper Saguenay had kept them away (that and the Olympic Games, which were now in their last week). We had hoped to sail the navigable extent of the fjord - about seventy or eighty miles, all of it in water over 500 fathoms deep, according to our charts. A combination of time constraints and the abnormal amount of debris in the river (large parts of houses floated past every so often) meant we only made it twenty miles upstream, to a tenuous but beautiful anchorage on the western shore. Tenuous because we had to drop our anchor in forty feet, back into twelve feet of water, drop a stern anchor, then hope we were right in calculating an eight-foot tide drop. Meanwhile the current pushes first against the starboard side, half an hour later against the port then back again as eddies flowed back and forth in the bay. In spite of this, we swore to return one day. This dramatic, deserted cruising country that has about it a great sense of isolation and wildness. Exploring on shore, we came across moose tracks on the paths.

It is not hard to imagine the Saguenay in winter, with the thermometer at minus 40C, the ice six foot thick - and no prospect of a visit by a human for four more months. Near here they filmed not only "The Hotel New Hampshire" but "Black Robe", a harrowing story of the first French missionaries to venture into the land of the Hurons that leaves you physically cold as you leave the cinema!

Exiting the Saguenay requires further intricate calculations but is a less harrowing experience than coming in. Two miles out from the mouth you reach the spaceship like lighthouse of Haut-Fond Prince, with its helicopter landing platform, and you can hang a left downstream into the ever widening Gulf of the St., Lawrence. The river is some twenty miles wide at this point, but at night you can make out scattered lights on the Southern shore; the North shore is almost deserted.

We angled across in dense fog, a forty mile stretch from the North shore to the region of Ile du Bic. The water is surprisingly cold - 3 or 4 degrees Celsius only, and there is heavy condensation inside the bilge. At Bic, one still night, we heard an unforgettable sound - the howling of wolves as the moon came up.. The wilderness never seems so far away in Canada.

The navigation continued to be nerve-wracking until the very end of our journey. At Bic, we felt our way into an anchorage with our bows barely visible in the fog but blue sky was visible at the masthead. Rowing ashore, we carefully took compass bearings and, climbing up the hillside, had the bizarre sight of Tarka's mast poking through a dense bed of white fluff - the kind of sight you normally see from a plane.

Our final run took us twenty miles to Rimouski - all in dense fog. By following the depth contours, we were able (with some luck) to find the red and green channel markers indicating the entrance to Rimouski, but it was so thick that we could only see one at a time. We sat at anchor for an hour, there was a momentary lifting and we raced into the marina at Rimouski.

Rimouski is the last port of any size before the Gaspé peninsula curls around to the South. On the deck was a sturdy-looking but weather-beaten 25 foot steel vessel by the name of Dove - on its stern hung a home made wind-vane, that infallible calling card of ocean rovers. We introduced ourselves and found that Dove was crewed by an old acquaintance from British Columbia, Winston Bushnell, whom we had last met in British Columbia in 1985, before we began our circumnavigation. Winston had just completed an historic voyage: from Nanaimo (British Columbia) to Rimouski, via the Northwest Passage, with a wintering over at Pangnirtung (Baffin Island) - a voyage recently featured in Cruising World. I found myself wondering how much longer we could bear the shore life before setting off again, this time for good.



- Looking for a boat?
Try: <http://www.soundingspub.com>

Next day, we arranged for the local crane to pull us out of the water. We headed back home to Ivy Lea, our point of departure, at about 60 knots: Tarka was on the flatbed, and we rode in the cab, cringing at every bump and pothole, wincing as we weaved through the evening rush hour traffic in Montreal. It took us twelve hours to retrace overland the five hundred miles that had taken us three weeks by water (coming back upstream, we calculated, would have taken at least six weeks).

This was not a restful vacation, but if you sail the Great Lakes and you're tired of those July and August crowds, well, a cruise down the St. Lawrence to the ocean is different.

New on the BOAT/U.S. Web Page

If you haven't cruised over to the redesigned BOAT/U.S. home page (<http://www.boatus.com>) on the Internet, there are some valuable new features including: regional boating news, weather, fishing reports, and events, as well as regional listings of BOAT/U.S. Marine Centers, TowBOAT/U.S. towers, Cooperating Marinas, and Classified Ads. Members can "surf" the whole U.S. or home in on their own boating area.



Nick & Jenny Coghlan
Tarka the Otter



Our Vega is up for sale -

R.D. 3 Box 1094
Belfast, Maine 04915

Dear Sid,

My wife and I really enjoyed another good 3 month cruise in the Bahamas - our third. We had plenty of wind and too many "northers" including being blown ashore with two other anchored boats during a 55 squall - fortunately at low tide. We were able to get off without incident three hours later as the tide came in.

We have decided to put Bochica up for sale either in the Bahamas, where she is dry stored at Green Turtle Cay, Abacos, or in Florida.

Our plans call for living aboard for 6 months a year and we feel a need for a few more creature comforts in deference to our advancing years - perhaps on a Pearson 35 or 365. We still plan on keeping our other Vega "Fiddler" in Maine.

Anyone interested in getting a well equipped, fully found Vega can call me at 207-338-5999 for information.

Your newsletter is always the first thing I read when the mail comes. I trust that all is well with you

PAUL Mc MAHON

Jeff Johnson writes about racing to Vera Cruz, Mexico

2/28/97

Dear Sid;

We have sold our Vega ("2955) for a larger vessel - with the idea of sailing oceans. I still consider myself a Vega sailor and am looking forward to attending the 1998 Vega International Friendship Regatta. I wish we had gone to the 1996 one instead of being on my failed trip to Vera Cruz.

It was the Regatta de Amigos sailboat race, which goes from Galveston, Texas to Vera Cruz, Mexico, a distance of about 650 miles. Although the experience was not all together unpleasant, we did get to exercise the book knowledge learned in the Power Squadron courses. They say there are three parts to every cruise. Part one is the planning, part two is actually doing the cruise, and part three is telling the war stories about part two. Usually the less enjoyable part two is the more enjoyable part three is - such as the case with this cruise.

The Regatta de Amigos race is organized by the Galveston Bay Cruising Association (GBCA) and has been run every other year since 1966. After so many years, this bunch really knows what it takes to run an international event such as this. There are several planning meetings/parties, and long lists of things to do and things to have before you depart. Lily and I spent 4 months of pretty intensive preparation, and felt confident that we were ready, thanks to Keith Sheer's Cruise Planning course. I found getting together a crew that I felt comfortable with the most difficult. Not many people want to take 17 days vacation with most of the days bobbing around the Gulf of Mexico. For the trip to Veracruz I had two HPS members, Phil Peron and Larry Kingsland.

The start of the race was 24 May at 1705. We started well with everyone. The wind was from the expected direction, Southeast at 15 to 20 knots. With shortened sails we tried to sail the rhumb line, a course of 187, and made 90 miles toward Vera Cruz the first day. It was pretty rough going with the boat constantly heeling 20 to 30 degrees, bumpy, and nobody really felt like eating much. These conditions were expected, more or less. The second day was more of the same, with slightly more favorable conditions. Again we made about 90 miles toward the mark. We were forced to tack about twice a day to stay near the rhumb line.

At the start of the third day the barometer started to drop, clouds formed, the wind began to build to a gale, the seas got up to 10 or 12 feet, and I started to say to myself, "Is this supposed to be fun?" It was a rough night. We hoisted the shortest sails I had on the boat and locked the wheel - pointing us in generally the right direction. On my 0200 AND 0400 watches the moon would occasionally peek through the clouds. The moonlight revealed the sea state nicely; picture perfect for a gale!

At this point in the trip the winds were supposed to be more favorable, but we weren't seeing them - still sailing into the wind. By morning we realized we would be making Vera Cruz at least two days later than expected, since we had made only 30 miles in 20 hours. We tried to hail other yacht, and the Coast Guard to inform our families that we'd be late. No luck on contacting anyone. We saw a ship and called for a weather report, but they could only give us the standard high seas weather forecast, which was so absurd that we both laughed. By mid-day I knew that even if all went well we'd be arriving in Vera Cruz Saturday night, too late to reprovision and rest for departure on Sunday. (All shops are closed on Sunday in Vera Cruz.) So, with bitter disappointment, we turned around and headed for Galveston.

It was a pleasant trip back, sailing off the wind as it were. We made 130 miles per day. Everyone felt like it was the right thing to do, and all were happy to watch the dolphins play with the boat on the return. The only downside was that we collected flying fish on deck, which needed to be cleaned regularly.

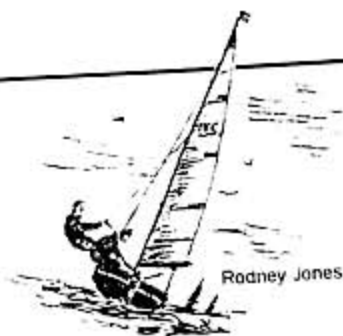
All in all it was quite an experience. In the aftermath I learned that of the 90 boats that entered, about 50 made it to Vera Cruz. Two boats were dis-masted and one developed loose keel bolts. We only suffered some minor damage to the rigging and two sails needed repair.

We won't be sailing to windward in the near future - - -

Jeff Johnson

Needing a replacement waterpump diaphragm?

5206 East 131st Ave
Tampa Florida 33617
4 March 1997



Dear Sid,

Have been very busy around here since I retired on June 22, 1996, after 46 years with the railroad. During the last few years that I worked I averaged about 65 hours a week and those hours didn't leave much time for anything else. I had enough projects in my garage and workshop to last a couple of years but am gradually getting things under control.

I bought a new Yaesu transceiver, but have not had it on the air yet. When I got my "ham" ticket in 1947 almost all equipment was home built. After WWII, surplus radio equipment could be bought for so much a pound. I guess they considered most of it junk. The taxpayers are probably still paying for all of it!

I've found a new material for the Vega galley water pumps. (remember, I had sent you one for evaluation). I would make a set of these diaphragms for any of our club members who might need them. Don't know if they are available from a commercial supplier any more. Anyway, pass the word along!

The Vega newsletter contains a lot of information on things that apply to any boat, and I don't want to miss out on anything.

In January of 1996 I bought a 1971 Mariner ketch (31 ft) I plan to go to Dry Tortugas in May. If the weather is good I might even go to VP7 land (Bahamas).

"73" and "DX"

John
John Ritter
"Freiheit" #1037

Victor Lees ("Good Things, #1813) repairs his rudder shaft.



December 28, 1996
4418 Route 309
Schnecksville, PA 18078

Dear Sid,

I finally got a little time to write to you and send in my dues!

My boat "Good Things" needs a new stuffing box and a new lagging job on my old exhaust pipe, leading from the engine exhaust manifold to the anti siphon bend. I am also considering a beef-up of the main bulkhead. If anyone has any pertinent information on the above items, I would greatly appreciate hearing from them.

My amateur (ham) radio call sign was changed through the FCC's "Vanity Call sign" program is now "W3NKD". This used to be my father's call sign. I will be using my ham gear more frequently when I get to sail south - in the near future.

My wife Barb and I have looked for the Vega Maintenance Manual and have checked with the Post Office several times. We never received the manual when we joined the association. If you can send us another manual we would appreciate it!

I read about one of our members having problems with the tiller clamp affair, which fastens the tiller to the rudder shaft. I had the same problem in 1988 and solved it by carefully drilling a 1/2" hole through the bronze fitting at the bottom of the tiller. I also drilled through the stainless steel rudder shaft. A 1/2" x 3 1/2" 308 alloy stainless steel bolt with two nuts and a laceshore between the nuts keeps the bolt in place. I think I used a small amount of "Loctite" on the threads of the bolt during assembly of the two nuts. This repair made the steering more positive, since the clamp would slip under higher than normal loads when the wind pipes up. Remove the bolt occasionally and grease it with waterproof grease - once every two years or so!

If you are not accustomed with the use of a 1/2" geared drill, get someone who is experienced with its use. The job can be done in the cockpit by one person - like I did. But first, you must align the rudder with the tiller and tighten the daylight out of the tiller clamp before drilling! Use oil when drilling and use a new or resharpened bit. The relative movement and vibration present when drilling will cut a few more thousandths of an inch clearance, for the bolt to be inserted. I pushed the tiller all the way over to the starboard side of the cockpit with the back of my left leg to gain access to the bronze fitting and hold it still. Unfortunately, if you drill a hole which is not "square" with the shaft you may weaken the shaft. So, get someone with a good eye who is experienced with big drills. Be sure to buy two bolts, 4 nuts and two split washers - save one complete assembly in case of a bolt failure, or loss of a bolt - down the cockpit drain. Put this in your spare part box.

Sincerely

Victor M. Lees Jr.
W3NKD

Its just a matter of time, patience and money!

Richard C. Schmehl
70 Periwinkle Lane
Bremen, Maine 04551

8 March 1997



Dear Sid,

I'm ashamed to say that I haven't contributed anything to our newsletter in quite a few years. While wandering around in a pick-up truck camper with my wife Nancy for part of this winter, I finally compiled a few items from the Log of "NAN-SEA III" our 1976 Vega (#2858") and trust they will be of interest.

Event 1

In August of 1990, returning from a local sail, I pulled alongside a friend's sloop tied up to my spare mooring. I had not used my diesel the entire day and having lowered and stored the sails, I started the engine to move to my mooring some 100 feet away. When I got to the mooring I shut down the engine. About nine days later, after a rather damp week, I tried to start it up only to find it to be "frozen" as tight as if it had been welded! Starter was OK, I decompressed, pilled the injectors, checked the oil for water, etc, etc. The local Volvo dealer said it could be a broken rod and not really worth repairing. He suggested a new engine (the MD6A being no longer available) for about \$5,000. to \$5,500. and could not touch it until next spring.

Discouraged, I opted for the Yamaha outboard I mentioned earlier. The O/B rack cost \$163.00 and I mounted it in place of the boarding ladder using the two existing holes and two more above them. The Yamaha came with low gearing and a large three blazed prop designed for just displacement type vessels, and with a 10 to 143 amp alternator. It was fairly easy to install alongside a float. The six gal. gas tank I mounted on the rear lazarette cover, and built a wooden seat over it. Overall, not a difficult job. Results - - - EXCELLENT! This engine pushes her along nearly as well as the diesel, even better maneuverability, quieter, and nearly as economical. Cavitation was no problem and a fouled prop could be easily cleared. The down side: It doesn't look as "salty".

Event 2

When I hauled the boat that fall, I hauled the engine (\$50.00 to lift it out and lower it into a utility trailer) and I put it into my garage. After reading all the diesel manuals I could borrow, I came away with very little hope. Thinking I had nothing to lose, I started to disassemble her piece by piece. I removed the head and poured penetrating oil around the cylinders, formed a hard wood block to fit the shape of the cylinder head and tried tapping on them to see if they would break loose, pulled the transmission, removed all the gear covers, etc to check for damage. I even tried a crow bar on the fly-wheel. I took off the fly wheel and laid the engine on its side and removed the oil pan. For no real

reason, I placed the hard wood block I had made against one of the counter weights on the drive shaft and gave it a rap with a hammer - - IT MOVED! Once broken free, I could rotate the shaft freely with the hand crank and found an approximately 1/8 inch rust spot down low on one of the cylinder walls. In disassembling the engine I found everything to be in surprisingly good condition so I burnished out the rust spot and reassembled everything. I set the engine up in a wooden frame, held my breath, and fired it up. It blew black smoke for a bit, cleared out and seemed to run just fine. My conclusion? One of the manuals That I looked through (not a Volvo one) mentioned "never stop a diesel COLD, even new ones have been known to freeze up." - end of quote with no clue given as to why! I made a mental note NEVER to stop the engine when cold again.

Event 3

In June 1991 I reinstalled the diesel and left the O/B on for a back-up and launched. Both engines ran great - using the O/B for calmer waters and short hops; the diesel for rougher waters and longer trips. By 1993 however, the diesel began getting more difficult to start (but it ran just fine once it started), so I started more and more giving a squirt of Ether into the air intake, decompressing until turning over at a good speed and then putting the compressing lever back down. This worked good until the last day of the season when it wouldn't start when using the ether. I used the O/B and brought the boat to my yard and had it hauled. Once out of the water I continued to attempt to start the diesel, but without any luck!

Event 4

In the spring of 1994 I took off the diesel, prop and launched, planning to use only the Yamaha o/b for the season. It ran great and the boat sailed even faster without the drag of the Diesel prop. (Mine was a large fixed prop as the combi had been removed prior to my purchasing the vessel.

Event 5

Oct. 1994: I hauled the boat and again lifted out the diesel. I had run across a mechanic who only worked on large (12 wheeler type) diesels and being on the coast, he was thinking of expanding into smaller boat diesel repairs. He took a look at my MD6A, made some checks and figured I had burned out a valve (perhaps from my use of Ether, although he was not altogether certain). He was 100% right but it was two winters later that I got my diesel back through no fault of his - in fact he was, I felt, most patient. While he contacted nearby suppliers, I phoned and wrote to every source I could find listed in my copies (for over many years) of the our "Vega Newsletter", We COULD NOT FIND what we needed most: at least one new intake valve that could be reground. I finally had a local boatyard suggest that I use valves from a different model Volvo that had the same diameter, stem, the length of which was short but within tolerance, a skirt with excess dia. and angle that could be machined down. So, the work was finally completed:

All new gaskets; oil & new filters; new exhaust hose & clamps; exhaust manifold reinforced by welding; all (exhaust new & intake reworked new) four valves replaced; new valve guides and springs; engine completely gone over (head Magnifluxed; compression, bearings, injectors, etc. checked, engine

flushed, cleaned, tuned and painted).

Cost: UNDER \$900. (Machine shop parts & labor: \$720.52; the balance to the mechanic.

Event 6

In 1996 I reinstalled my MD6A diesel and launched in the spring. Still leaving the O/B in place (just in case). Later that season my starter went! - After several horrendous estimates of up to \$800. (+ or -) I took it to a local home workshop mechanic who did that type of work. It was ready the next day and i was charged only \$25.00. It works just fine along with my diesel and O/B. We'll see what next years brings.-

That's it for now Sid. I hope there might be some useful information in all this. If nothing else, perhaps a message about chancing the use of "non-dealer" mechanics when cost estimates appear to be excessive

Sid: I've mentally thanked you many times for carrying on with our newsletters. My many thanks. (I think I said it for all our members!)

Yours,



Richard (Dick) Schmehl



Welcome aboard!

Cory Harris
3131 Timmons Lane - #223
Houston, TX 77027
Tel: (713) 627-8966
Looking for a Vega

Paul & Christine Lepisto
622 Union Avenue
Rock Hill, SC 29730
Tel: (803) 325-1033
Looking for a Vega

Bill Zellman
2906 South Herman St
Milwaukee, WI 53207
Tel: (414)481-4557
#711, "Tonic", 1972

Welcome Back!

Dan Kierns
7 Bull street
Newport, RI 02840
"Andsar", 1969