

High endurance lifeboat



vessels are a Robert Allan Ltd. modification of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution's shorter fibreglass-hulled Severn-class lifeboats. The FLORENCIA BAY is frequently seen patrolling nearby channels and conducting crew changes between Kitimat and Hartley Bay.

PACIFIC YELLOWFIN



In the early 2000s, oilman and wooden boat enthusiast Pete Whittier purchased the vessel and commissioned an extensive rebuild at Point Hope Shipyard. Current owner Colin Griffinson traded his converted 70-ft seiner for the YELLOWFIN (he wanted a larger vessel and Whittier wanted a smaller one) and brought it into Canadian registry as the PACIFIC YELLOWFIN. It now frequents Kitimat's waters in late summer, drawn by the region's rich wildlife and adventure opportunities, and it stops at MK Bay Marina during passenger changeovers. It retains its original meticulously maintained Atlas Imperial diesel engines, which provide a cruising speed of 10 knots and a remarkable range of 4,000 nautical miles. Hearing the historic engines fire up is a testament to the vessel's enduring craftsmanship.

Puff's MAGIC DRAGON



Running at speed in Douglas Channel near Kitimat is the Canadian Coast Guard's search and rescue lifeboat FLORENCIA BAY (2018, Hike Metal Products, ON). The vessel was on its way from Kitimat to Hartley Bay, a coastal village where a new Coast Guard base has recently been established. The 19 m FLORENCIA BAY, which is stationed in Hartley Bay, is one of 20 Bay class high endurance SAR lifeboats built by Hike and also by Chantier Naval Forillon (QC) as part of a \$177 million fleet renewal project that started in 2017 and was completed in 2024. These shore-stationed self-righting lifeboats provide essential search and rescue services up to 100 nautical miles from shore including conducting searches, responding to marine distress calls and providing assistance to disabled vessels. The aluminum-hulled Bay class

Tied up at Kitimat's MK Bay Marina is the 114-ft (35 m) charter cruise vessel PACIFIC YELLOWFIN. Built in 1943 by Billings Shipyard (Maine) for the U.S. Army Corps, it originally served as JMP 64, one of a series of Junior Mine Planters. The design was from Seattle's H.C. Hanson, reflecting traditional Pacific Northwest workboat aesthetics. During World War II, JMP 64 and its sister ships were reassigned as Freight/Passenger (FP) vessels in the Pacific theatre, playing a crucial role in recapturing the Aleutian Islands by transporting troops and ammunition. Post-war, FP 64 was acquired by California's Department of Fish and Game, renamed YELLOWFIN, and maintained in excellent condition over a decade of service. It subsequently passed through various private owners, including Tacoma Tow Boat Company in 1980.

For many years, lifelong prawn fisherman Warren Puff, affectionately known as "Puff," was a fixture at Kitimat's MK Bay Marina, tending to his beloved 32-foot Farrell-hulled pleasure boat MAGIC DRAGON. A happy-go-lucky fellow standing just over four feet tall, Puff spent much of his life on the ocean, and he is always quick with a joke and a smile. His two great loves were always his wife and the MAGIC DRAGON, but two years ago he made the tough decision to sell the vessel for his one true love — his wife. This photo, taken before Puff sold the MAGIC DRAGON, captures him aboard the boat alongside contributing writer/photographer Captain Grant Lutz. Despite no longer owning the vessel, Puff can still be spotted at MK Bay Marina, lovingly checking on his old "baby" as if it were still his, a testament to the bond between a mariner and boat.