

CARL ALLEN, OWNER OF 24.5-METRE VIKING FRIGATE AND TREASURE-HUNTING BOAT *AHTI*

I'LL NEVER FORGET...



...the day we found the big gold chain... It was October 2022. My previous yachts, the Westport *Gigi* and the Damen Yachting *Axis*, and our workboats were at the site of the *Maravillas*,

which sank in 1656 on the Little Bahama Bank. It was a beautiful, calm day, the exact kind you hope for. We had found pottery shards, which we find all the time, then our guy came up, screaming on the radio, "Oh my god, something's down there." I learned long ago not to get too excited, but I knew from the tone this wasn't a small thing. When we got there, they had already pulled it up; it was laid out on this board: 80 links, about two pounds of gold.

I can't even describe that moment. We had been doing this for years and found a lot of stuff, but nothing close to this. Almost right behind it comes the premier piece, a brooch with a cabochon emerald, two gold crosses on either side and 12 small emeralds. The first thing that hits me is, "Who was the last person to touch this?" It takes you back. Most likely, the chain was made in China, shipped through the Philippines in the Acapulco-Manila galleons that ended up in Acapulco, then went over land to Veracruz, where the *Maravillas* picked it up.

Everybody thought I was a fool, that there was nothing left out there, it was already salvaged. But I never believed that. We've had a few big finds since then, but that was the big day.



INTERVIEW KATE LARDY



COLIN GRIFFINSON

Yacht: *Pacific Yellowfin*
Length: 34.6m
Year: 1943
Location: Vancouver, British Columbia

How was your past charter season in Desolation Sound and the Great Bear Rainforest?

Down this year. We believe it was due to the Dow Jones and the S&P being in the dumps at the start of the year. We were still out on the boat all the time though, using it as a family boat. We also bought a kayaking lodge on Quadra Island, so it gave us an opportunity to get in there and sort that out.

How was the wildlife there?

This year was off the charts – I saw things I had never seen before. In one instance, with guests in the tender and on kayaks, we found a wolf pack on the beach, hovering in the tree line. Then the leader of the pack came down, stood on a rock in front of us and did a crazy howling experience. I've heard it before, but I've never seen it happen. Then out of the bush came a young wolf. We were sitting on the tide line in the seaweed, and he came right up to the kayaks and started sniffing them. Another time, I was driving back to the boat on my own and I saw a humpback breaching – up and down, slapping its pectoral fins. I came up alongside to watch it and counted 40 breaches before I left. Usually you get three or four; I had never



seen more than seven. Luckily, I had my cell phone or no one would believe it. That's why we call our charters "adventures unscripted". We know where the animals are. We know how to work the tides, but every time we go out, it's a completely different story.

How is *Pacific Yellowfin* holding up?

Well, it's a boat... you just keep throwing money at her! Actually, she's in great shape and we're stoked at the moment. We run with the original engines – manufacturing all the parts we require – and we just found another complete engine in good condition that was in a tugboat. It'll provide us with lots of spare parts.

Where does she spend the winter?

About 20 years ago, I had the good fortune to buy a small marina in Vancouver and then built a yacht enclosure for the *Yellowfin*. It's basically a complete workshop; plus I turned another floating shed into a woodworking and welding shop. So we do all of our own maintenance with our own team of shipwrights. I couldn't do what I do today if I hadn't done this; it makes it so easy to take care of a wooden ship that's kept in a rainforest.



IRA LEVENSHON

Yacht: *Satori*
Length: 28.2m
Year: 2016
Location: Saint Augustine, Florida

You're on your way back to Miami from Maine?

Yes, we've been going to Maine for 15 or 16 years. The first time, just my wife and I took the boat – I think we had a 77-footer (23.5m) then – and we made a zillion stops, in every little anchorage and town. Each year since we dropped more and more anchorages and villages, and this year we spent a little over three months in Southwest Harbor, which is down east, near Bar Harbor.

What's it like there?

The weather was just glorious. And people are very kind in general. Years ago, I made the mistake of asking a Maine resident, "How's it going?" – a common greeting that we say when we don't really want to know how you're doing. And he told me for 20 minutes, so I don't do that anymore.

What did you do?

We used our chase boat to run around. My wife and I are very active; we used to run up mountains, now we walk up them. We hike daily, usually for an hour or two. The views are fabulous. We have lobster every other day and a lot of fresh fish, scallops and oysters. At least three times a week, we picnic on our chase boat, picking up a mooring or anchor somewhere. It's just a beautiful place to be.

What's your one don't-miss recommendation?

There's Cadillac Mountain, which I think is the tallest mountain in the east on the water. Watching the sunrise from there is absolutely fabulous. And, of course, the lobster. The lobster we eat was in the water that morning. We don't eat it anywhere else. My wife makes a great lobster fra diavolo.

Where to next?

We have a trip planned to the Florida Keys at the end of December; then in January or February we'll go to the Bahamas. We're constantly going places in our boats.



MEMBERS' LOGBOOK

Wildlife encounters in the Pacific Northwest and hopping from Maine to Miami on a Horizon



PHOTOGRAPHY: KALI WEXLER; MATTHEW RISSELL; IAN MCALLISTER; GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY OF OWNER