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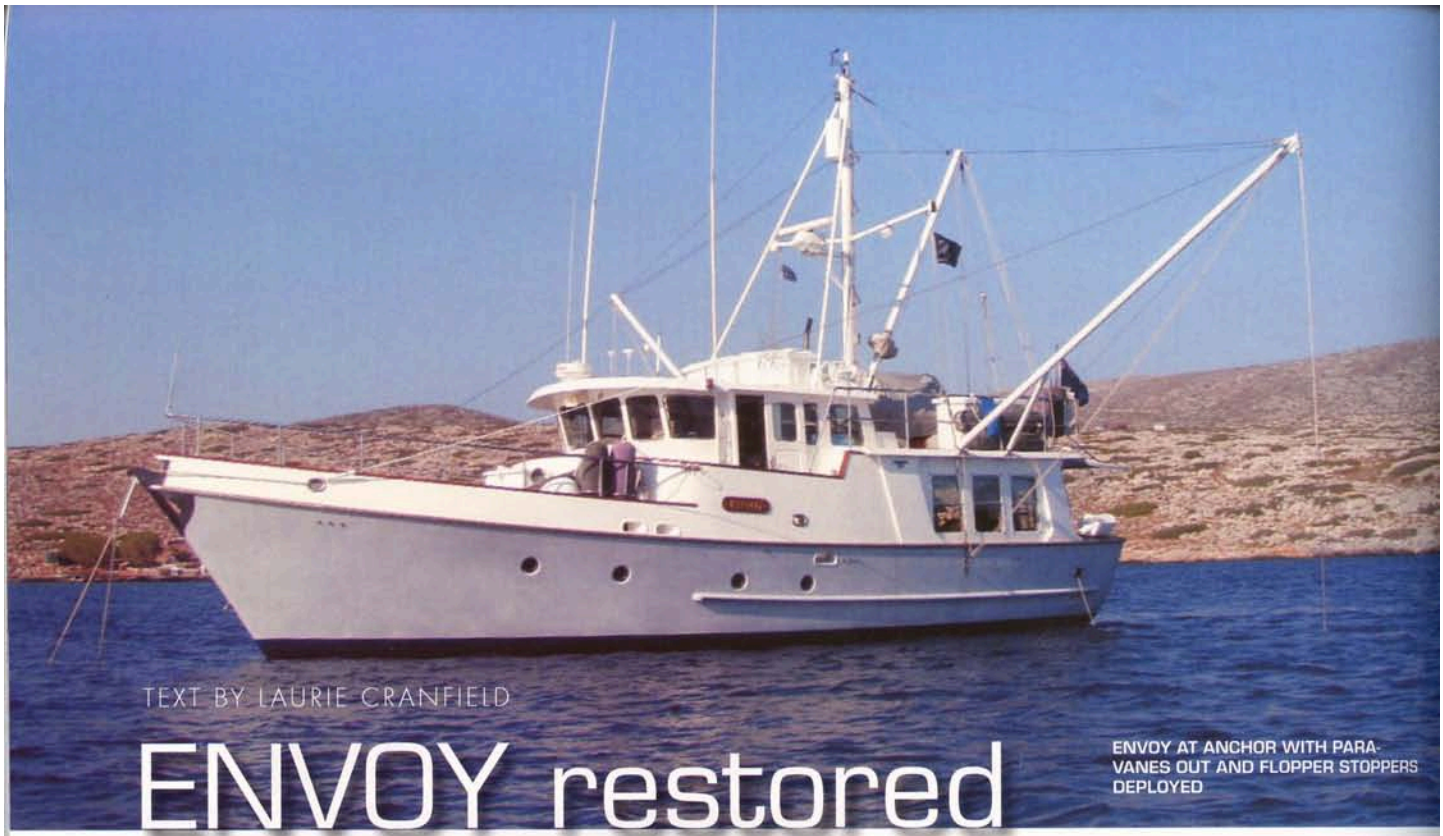

ENVOY AT ANCHOR WITH PARA-VANES OUT AND FLOPPER STOPPERS DEPLOYED

TEXT BY LAURIE CRANFIELD

ENVOY restored to cruising trim

Voyage of the ENVOY Part four

PARTS ONE, TWO AND THREE OF THIS SERIES DETAILED THE PURCHASE OF OUR NORDHAVN 46 PASSAGEMAKER, ENVOY, AND OUR CRUISE FROM OSTIA IN ITALY TO MARMARIS IN TURKEY, WHERE WE LEFT ENVOY ON THE HARDSTAND IN JANUARY 2008, NOT KNOWING WHEN WE WOULD JOIN HER AGAIN. PART FOUR IS LARGELY TECHNICAL, DEALING WITH THE ISSUES WE FACED AFTER WE RETURNED TO ENVOY IN APRIL 2010 TO RESUME OUR CRUISING.

To leave any boat without use for many months is inviting problems. We did our best to minimize those problems, and the actions we took are covered in detail in the 6 January 2008 posting to our blogspot, **www.envoyin-themed.blogspot.com.** We also contracted a marine engineering company, Demir Marine, to keep Envoy's batteries charged, check her dehumidifiers, and renew her gelcoat and paint on all underwater hull sections, rudder and stabilizer fins. With Envoy out of the water for such a long period we considered this an ideal time to get the hull work done. Demir contacted us later to suggest renewing our propeller shaft, as its engineers had found signs of corrosion pitting on the current shaft.

Before returning to Marmaris we made an extensive list of jobs to do, and checks to make, and estimated we would need four to six weeks to complete it. We decided to concentrate first on jobs needing completion prior to getting Envoy back into the water, including replacing the seals on our hydraulic stabilizers, fitting the new propeller shaft, cutlass bearing and stuffing box seals, fitting new zinc anodes, re-installing the keel cooler, antifouling the hull, changing all fuel filters, getting the fuel polishing system working so we could filter our on-board fuel, checking the steering, checking the bow thruster, testing bilge pumps, and getting the Lugger main engine, Yanmar wing engine and Northern Lights generator running.

We also knew that when Envoy was in the water there would still be some large jobs to do, such as getting the HRO water maker and Naiad stabilizers working.

First Impressions

As our flight approached Dalaman Airport the Med was stunning, with a flat calm turquoise sea, blue cloudless sky, and the sun reflecting off the nearby snow-capped mountains. We checked into an apartment near the marina for the first two nights, knowing it would take a couple of days to get Envoy sufficiently organized for us to sleep aboard.

With great excitement and some trepidation we climbed the ladder to board Envoy, and found she was pretty much how we had left her. The full cover we invested in had done its job; the cover was dirty and the boat was a bit dusty outside, but good inside. This cover was well worth the NZ$5,000 investment and can be used again. The dehumidifiers had also done their job and the boat was dry. Two of the three AGM battery banks were in great condition having been charged about once a month. Demir had nearly completed the work on the hull, and the quality of the work looked very good.

We were delighted to find no evidence of any insects or rodents, not even a single ant on board, just a gecko in the cockpit.

Ladders on the hardstand can be extremely dangerous, with many people suffering injuries falling from them. Marina workmen are very casual about them, and we lashed our ladder to Envoy to secure it from slipping.

Envoy is superbly equipped with spare parts, tools and chandlery, but we have to know where to find something when we need it, so after more than two years away we had to re-familiarize ourselves.

By the end of the first week we had done dozens of small jobs and during daytime it was chaotic with different tradesmen coming and

going, hatches and cupboards open, and tools and spare parts scattered everywhere. Demir is quite a sizeable operation, employing about 40 staff, and we were dealing with about 12 of them, because in Turkey they are very much specialists – they have engineers, carpenters, electricians, painters, riggers and labourers all working strictly to their role. The tradesmen were all very friendly and helpful, although communication was difficult as only a few spoke English. They had lots of different priorities with other boats, so to encourage them to stay with Envoy we plied them with coffee, water and cookies, as well as being on hand to assist.

Life on the Hardstand

Within a few days we were fairly comfortably living aboard Envoy on the hardstand with 220V power, water supply from a hose, refrigeration (Envoy has a system which is either air or water-cooled), LPG stove, microwave, and all electrics operational.

Our days rolled on, measured by progress towards getting Envoy into the water.

Marmaris Yacht Marine Marina is roughly the size of Auckland's Half Moon Bay Marina, but with several hundred boats on the hardstand ranging from about 10m to 40m long during winter. The marina has a 330 tonne and a 70 tonne travel lift, and these were operating continuously six days per week from 0900hrs to about 2000hrs, sometimes later. The marina required all contractors entering the site to register with them, provide evidence of third party insurance, and sign an indemnity guaranteeing to pay for any damage caused by their actions. This requirement resulted from two fires aboard boats caused by contractors. Contractors also have to pay the marina operators 15% commission (meaning the boat owner finally pays) for all work done in the marina. The marina has no restrictions about people living on boats, either in the water or on the hard. In the water, you're understandably not allowed to discharge sewerage overboard, but there seems to be no problem about shower or dish water, provided you don't have too many soap suds. On the hardstand you cannot discharge anything overboard. During the day time we walked the 100m to the toilet and shower block, and during the night we used a bucket. Our mornings started with me emptying the bucket at the toilet block. Diane would pass the bucket down the ladder to me and say, "whoops nearly dropped it on your head" – some sense of humour! The marina toilets and showers were spotless, and there seemed to be always someone cleaning them. The marina water was safe to drink, but many folks chose to buy bottled water for drinking, and use marina water for showers and dishes. The marina had a nice bar, open most of the day until the wee hours, and a good restaurant open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. There was a dolmus (bus) to Marmaris township every half hour, and costing NZ$5 each way for the 30 minute ride.

Our First Unexpected Problems

Demir Marine showed me that water was dripping from under the keel aft, even though Envoy had been on the hardstand for 27 months. They had assumed it was sea water, but I tasted it, and it was fresh. When we left Envoy the bilge was dry, but now it contained about 50mm of water. I dried out the bilge, but there was still fresh water coming into the bilge from for'ard. The source turned out to be leakage from two out of our three 20 year-old stainless steel water tanks. The water was finding its way from the bilge to the bottom of the keel where a section of the bilge's gelcoat under the propeller shaft had deteriorated, with large cracks through the gelcoat going down into the laminate. This was a very difficult area to access, but fortunately the new propeller shaft had not yet been installed through the bilge, so we had a bit of room, and Demir removed the old gelcoat using long chisels. Then we dried the bilge using a hot air gun for a couple of days before Demir laid some new glass cloth and gelcoat making the bilge totally water tight. A couple of days after that was completed the drip from the bottom of the keel stopped and Demir were able to finish coating the small area under the keel they had left to drip.

Then we turned our attention to the two leaking water tanks. This would not normally be a major problem – remove the tanks, pressure test them to find the leaks, fix the leaks and re-install them – simple enough? No, wrong! Aboard Envoy these tanks are under the cabin sole in the guest cabin. One is under the built-in double berth, and has the air conditioning compressor mounted over the top of it. The other is partly under a built-in settee. We met with Demir on board, and concluded we had to dismantle the guest cabin bit-by-bit until we could get the two tanks out. As these were the original 20 year-old stainless steel tanks Demir suggested that we fit new tanks to reduce the risk of going through this process again. We had to remove everything stored in the guest cabin and it took a Demir carpenter four days to dismantle the guest double berth and settee, and pull up the cabin sole of teak veneer laid over plywood (this was a major job which involved totally destroying the old cabin sole). Two engineers and two labourers then came and pulled the tanks out after much wrenching with crowbars. The tanks just fitted down Envoy's passageways with a few mm to spare, but the Demir guys were very considerate and taped bubble wrap over all the bulkheads so that no timber was damaged as the tanks were

ENVOY IN THE TRAVEL LIFT SLINGS DURING RE-LAUNCHING AT MARMARIS

ENVOY ON THE HARD AT MARMARIS PRIOR TO RE-LAUNCHING

IT'S IMPORTANT TO REGULARLY CHECK YOUR BILGE PUMP STRAINERS AND CLEAR THE DEBRIS WHICH ACCUMULATES AS SHOWN IN THIS PICTURE OF ENVOY'S STRAINER.

ENVOY'S GUEST CABIN AFTER STRIPPING OUT BUILT-IN FURNITURE, SHOWING THE WATER TANKS BEFORE THEY WERE REMOVED.

carried out. Now we had an empty shell where the guest cabin had been, and a large pile of broken timbers. The carpenter was a real professional, and had a great sense of humour; I asked him if he would remember how everything went back together, and he replied laughing, "I hope so". We ascertained the old tanks were rusted beyond economical repair, and Demir estimated one week to make and install the two new tanks using 316 stainless steel, and then one week to re-build the guest cabin.

We also discovered the bow thruster was not working, and it turned out to be caused by the bow thruster's dedicated battery bank being flat. A circuit breaker had tripped, cutting power to the bank's charger for the whole time we were away. These batteries are big, and extremely heavy. Fortunately the young Demir guys hauled them out of the anchor locker, charged them for a few days, found them to be OK and hauled them back up on board again, where they have been fine since.

Followed by more progress

Meanwhile, we got our diesel filtration system working and commenced filtering our on-board fuel. Most pleasure boats only have a primary filter, such as a Racor, and then a secondary on-engine filter. On Envoy we filter all our fuel using a high-speed pump with a 2-micron Racor filter into a dedicated tank before it even gets to the primary filter. Only that dedicated tank supplies diesel to any engine's primary and secondary filters. It is often said that most diesel engine problems are fuel-related, and this system gives added protection.

By this time most equipment – radios, radars, GPS units, etc., had been checked and were OK. In the engine room all filters had been changed, the three engines checked, and water pump impellers and several suspect water hoses replaced. Since the marina didn't allow engines to be started on the hardstand, there was nothing more to be done in the engine room until we could hit the water, and see if the engines started.

We also did some cosmetic work on the hull and topsides. The gelcoat above the waterline was dull and chalky, so that was all cut and polished to its former high gloss. Demir used electric polishers on the hull, but the topsides were done by hand, and I assisted with this. It was pretty hard work in the heat, and those guys earn their bucks.

In 2008 we had protected the stainless steel stanchions and fittings with a light coating of SAE 30 oil. This worked well and the stainless steel all polished up easily after traces of oil were removed. We removed the stainless steel rubbing strips, as there was rust behind them leaching down onto the gelcoat. The strips were machine polished while the gelcoat underneath them was cleaned. Then the strips were re-fitted with new screws and sealant.

Envoy Finally in the Water

Although there was still much work to be completed, Envoy was launched on 12 May after 28 months out of the water. Apart from being more comfortable for us living aboard Envoy in the water, this was important because all sea cocks had been removed, serviced and re-sealed in place, and we needed to ensure there were no leaks. Better that we find any leaks then, with time on our hands. In fact there were only a couple of minor water leaks from hoses, solved by tightening the hose clamps.

Immediately after launching, Demir bled the fuel lines on Envoy's three engines and all started and ran fine. Then we checked that the generators and alternators were producing both AC & DC power. It was great to helm Envoy from the haul-out area to our berth, even though it was just a few hundred metres.

We had the engine room fire suppression system checked and certified, and needed to get the powder replaced in our seven portable extinguishers. All other safety equipment was checked and new flares purchased.

While this was being done we also had our Nautica 3.7m tender reconditioned and 25hp Yamaha 4-stroke outboard serviced. The tubes were leaking a bit of air and the hull needed sanding back and repainting where there had been some light barnacle growth. We made the mistake in 2007 of leaving the tender in the water too long, and in future will ensure we lift it out every week or so for a fresh water wash.

We were finally reaching the stage where most jobs on the list had been completed, and were thinking that if we had not been waiting for the new water tanks we would have been able to leave Marmaris shortly.

A few days later the new water tanks were completed and installed. The carpenter returned and fortunately did remember how everything went back together during the course of the week it took him to rebuild the cabin. He built the cabin sole in such a way that it can be removed if we have any future problems.

Stabiliser & Watermaker Issues

With help from the local HRO Seafari water maker technician we cleaned the sea water strainer, changed the filters and tested the unit. Although it was running OK there was a major water leak from one of the high pressure membrane tubes. The water maker was removed to the technician's workshop and we found out it was not going to be fixed any time soon as both tubes were cracked and needed replacement. These parts had to be made in the USA and then dispatched to Turkey. We decided not to wait for the water maker; very few boats in the Med have water makers, and they all manage just fine as water can be obtained for little or no cost at most ports and villages. Envoy's water tanks hold about 1,300 litres, and we purchased eight 30 litre plastic jerry cans to give us an extra 240 litres of water capacity plus the ability to move large volumes of water by dinghy. Because Envoy has fresh water flushing of the heads and a washing machine she uses more water than most vessels, but we have managed well using a daily average of 60 litres.

Then a new "challenge" emerged. The Naiad hydraulic stabilizers had their seals replaced while we were on the hard. This is an involved and difficult job requiring special equipment, but it all went OK. However when the servicemen arrived to test the system with Envoy in the water they found two problems. The first was easily resolved – a crack in a weld on the steel plate holding the Vickers hydraulic pump to the engine. The second problem was not so easy; although the hydraulics worked fine the electronic controls were "dead". The local Naiad agent's electricians spent some hours on this and managed to restore the 24V power supply, but they couldn't ascertain why the electronic control system would not work. Naiad USA was consulted and further testing carried out. The final result was that we needed a new power board for the electronics. Since we also have paravane stabilizers the hydraulic stabilizers are nice-to-have rather than essential equipment, and we decided to leave Marmaris without them operating. In 2007 we had spent two months cruising without the Naiads, but using our alternative paravane stabilizers when necessary. Many Nordhavns have paravane stabilizers only, and have cruised extensively and comfortably with them.

We had expected four to six weeks of work before we could depart from Marmaris, and it took us just over eight, although without completing all tasks. Naturally, we were disappointed about the water tanks, the water maker and the stabilizer issues, but we were thankful that nearly everything else was working well, and knew we could resolve the outstanding issues on our return to Marmaris later in the year.

We now planned to leave Marmaris on 1 June for a few days of sea trials in local Turkish waters, then cross to the Greek Islands of Rhodes, Karpathos and Crete, stay in Crete for several weeks, then return to Marmaris via Santorini, Ios, Amorgos and Kalimnos. We expected to spend about five and a half months cruising about 1,200NM.

PMY's next issue will cover Envoy's cruise to Crete and a serious technical problem from an unexpected quarter after our arrival there. PMY

ENVOY'S FULLY RESTORED GUEST CABIN AFTER THE NEW TANKS HAD BEEN INSTALLED UNDER THE CABIN SOLE.

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