

Nicholson 31 Association

“The classic blue water cruiser”



One Boat – Ten Stories

**SOUTHAMPTON
INTERNATIONAL
BOAT SHOW**

16-25 SEPTEMBER 2022

20 Tuesday

Atlantic Crossing:

Misty Ord 047 Jack Gifford & Alice Pr at

We set out to buy a boat for an adventure, a long cruise, ‘the’ trip, though at the time we didn’t know where that would take us or when! A perpetual yachting window shopper, a multitude of ideas came and went as to the right boat but it wasn’t until I walked slowly past a local boatyard that a realised the obvious answer had been staring right at me for weeks.

Parked stern to the fence bounding a busy local road, I had seen Misty Ord on numerous occasions before, her true identity being, rather ironically, largely obscured by the very keen ‘For Sale’ sign her then owner had hung on the rudder.

From pavement level I recognised her instantly as a Nicholson 31 and the penny dropped. Showing Alice at the earliest opportunity and viewing with the owner very shortly after, the deal was done, it was Spring of 2019; we had found our yacht, no question about it.



A season of sailing in Falmouth harbour confirmed what we immediately assumed to be the case; this boat would be perfect for wherever we had the guts to go. A summer cruise up channel to our native North Sea stumping ground we were given further reassurances by her very respectable passage making and easy manner in a range of seas.

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Fast forward through the pandemic (not that it felt like it at the time!), we had had quite enough of the nine to five, it was time to saddle up our game little expedition pony and head off. Finances and opportunities would allow for a year at a stretch so the only remaining question was, where to?

A North Atlantic loop was the mission we settled upon, with the unexpected twist of a circuit of the UK first. Various reasons brought this about and although not our initial plan, sailing around the country first was a big tick off the list of desired destinations and was a very thorough shake down sail, undertaken before heading further afield. By the time we closed the loop to Falmouth, every piece of equipment onboard had a thorough testing in an environment where spares and repairs were easy to come by; three months after we set-off we were truly ready to head out from the UK and explore further afield.

Leaving Cornwall in early August 2021 what followed was a three-month European itinerary starting with crossing Biscay to La Coruna and taking in the Galician Rias, Lisbon, Lagoons of the Algarve and the late summer heat of Andalucía. Taking progressively larger hops, and sailing longer stints over-night, we slowly but surely transformed from coastal sailors to feeling like an ocean crossing could well be doable. At every step of the way Misty appeared completely unphased, totally in her comfort zone; if we looked after her, we were in no doubt she would look after us.

Leaving the magnificent city of Cadiz in early October, this was it! 7 days to the Canaries saw Misty rollicking along the whole way. Repeating the impressive average speed we had enjoyed during our first channel cruise we felt increasingly reassured that we had landed on our feet with our choice of trusty steed. To this day neither Alice nor myself have ever felt seasick on Misty despite having sailed through just about every sea state or weather conditions.



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Making our way down the African coast we cruised through the beautifully un-spoilt Cape Verde islands, enjoying great company, superb fishing and some of the most pristine and quiet anchorages of the whole trip.

The rest, as they say, was history. Text book stuff enjoyed in a little boat that just kept giving. The ocean passages were, I'm very happy to say, totally uneventful. Some careful weather planning and boat preparation enabled the two of us to enjoy the ocean sailing we had always dreamed of; Misty's passage making prowess was doing us proud with the added bonus of earning us quite the kudos when dropping the hook next to much larger yachts doing the same trip.



It turns out that the reputation of the Nic 31 precedes it attracting many admiring looks and calls of 'Is that a Nicholson?' from across anchorages; our trip through the West Indies had many of our new friends questioning their choice of larger yachts, especially after we could always get closer to the beach and pay greatly reduced dock fees!

Getting a proper ocean-going yacht into only 31 feet always seemed quite the challenge to me but as we closed the loop through the Azores, back to our familiar home waters, we were unanimous that C&N created a real gem in the 31 and we were privileged to really put one through its paces.



After 13 months afloat and over twelve thousand miles together I'm glad to say we're still happily married, the boat is in better shape than when we left and we really did have the trip of a lifetime . . . until the next one!

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Amended following the death of Her Majesty *Queen Elizabeth II*

Ten Stories

16 Friday

Ownership Since New:

Dolly V 092 Alex Moore

17 Saturday

Nic31 Design & Development:

Michael Wright

18 Sunday

Argentina or bust:

Darteign 098 Eric Witheridge

19 Monday

***Funeral of
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II***

20 Tuesday

Atlantic Crossing:

Misty Ord 047
Jack Gifford & Alice Pr at

21 Wednesday

Cruising UK: Liberty Jane 095
Michael Wright

22 Thursday

Sailing Maine, USA:

Blueprint 113
Bill Roesner

23 Friday

The Future:

The boat & Association
Ian Stone

Boat Show – Association Day

24 Saturday

French Passages:

Michael Wright

25 Sunday

Upgrades:

High Spirits 022 Ian Stone

Cruising Ireland:

Seal Morning 013
Mitch Cameron-Mitchell

Find them at: <https://www.nicholson31.com/>



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