

Island Greeter greeted by Catalina Island

Latest Nordhavn 62 has successful first mini-cruise



[Island Greeter anchored off Catalina.](#)



[Dick Farrell demonstrates the stern launcher.](#)



[A fog banked Catalina Island greets "Island Greeter".](#)



[Frank and Dick launch the dinghy.](#)



[View of dawn breaking from the pilothouse.](#)



[Frank Adams at the helm of "Island Greeter".](#)

By Jeff Merrill

As most trawler aficionados know, the Nordhavn line was founded on the celebrated 46. She was – and continues to be – our best selling model with over 80 hulls built. A groundbreaker, a record breaker, a trendsetter, she epitomized everything Nordhavn.

Time marches on, however, and while the philosophy behind the N46 still remains the same, her layout and design grew antiquated and as such, the model is absent from the Nordhavn line of today. In fact, most of the early model Nordhavns are no longer in production. Except, that is, for the venerable Nordhavn 62. This, the second Nordhavn design, is probably our most distinctive looking yacht and perhaps that's why she has enjoyed a hugely successful run. Over the years we have built up a large fleet of 62s, which are now scattered all over the planet, with still more on the way.

There's something about the N62 that makes her special, something that gives her staying power. It's almost unheard of in modern boat building to have a design stay in demand for five years. Yet the Nordhavn 62 was first conceived back in 1993. So what exactly is the secret to her success? Her layout certainly doesn't match that of the "newer" designs developed in the 21st century which feature maintenance strakes in the keel and higher profiles. Undoubtedly, it is a testament to PAE chief designer Jeff Leishman's vision that the 62 is still so coveted, even though we have tried in the past to stop production.

One thing is for sure, when you see a 62 floating at anchor, your world will stop, if even only briefly, to take it all in, smile and wish that you could trade places with the lucky people aboard.

Frank and Debbie Adams have been following Nordhavn for over a decade. At one time they saw a 62 in an anchorage while they were sitting on their sailboat, and a seed was planted which has now grown to full bloom. Island Greeter is hull number 34 in the series and continues the tradition of setting higher standards with each new hull.

Frank lives and works in the Los Angeles area and has been enthusiastically visiting the Dana Point docks on a regular basis to watch the commissioning process. In the weeks that 62#34 has been here, Frank has taken the time to review every system, organize how he wants things to be set up and done a fantastic job of getting ready for ownership. Debbie has been able to join him on many occasions and she has spearheaded those items that required a lady's touch. Island Greeter will be one of the most beautiful yachts we have ever sent off to sea.

With holiday lights shining in the Dana Point harbor pre-dawn, I met Frank and his good friend Dick Farrell at 0600 on Thursday December 7, for a shake down cruise to Catalina Island. Debbie couldn't make this trip, so after I gave a brief orientation and confirmation that all of the

systems were set up properly and ready to go we left the dock at 0800 setting sail for the isthmus of Catalina.

December is a winter month in most parts of the Northern Hemisphere and so it was a typical winter day in California – about 70 degrees, sunny with flat calm seas, no wind and a bit of fog lingering. For a first-run shakedown, this made things very nice, almost too nice, and I wondered if we were being set up...

One of the things I like to do on a training run like this is to let the owner call the shots and assume responsibilities, with the idea that I am available as a sounding board and will offer suggestions if I disagree with any of the decisions. Frank had plotted our course ahead of time (the electronics package he had installed by Tom Gilbert of Top Cat Marine in Anacortes is superb!) The dash of Island Greeter is loaded with every conceivable display gadget imaginable from a camera monitor in the cockpit/engine room, to dual Nobeltec charts with radar overlays. Like Noah's Ark, two of everything: autopilots, radars, gps (actually 3!), etc.

N6234 features the Lugger 1276 single diesel with dry stack – one of the new electronic control engines and she also sports a Lugger L1064D wing engine which has a hydraulic power take off to run the windlass, deck wash, auxiliary bilge pump and both thrusters. On deck there are two tenders, a 17' Nautica widebody (with its own radar, autopilot – Frank intends to explore 50 – 100 miles away from the mother ship and so she is a supremely outfitted launch including seating for 6) and a smaller 10' Nautica for shorter-range dinghying.

The 40-mile distance from Dana Point to the less populated twin harbor near the west end of the isthmus made for a good run where we could settle in and get to know the boat. I like to teach by demonstrating my idea and then have my client actually do the "work". I think it is important on a first run to start the imprinting process of getting used to what is normal in the world of smell, sound, sight, touch, vibration, etc. on a new boat.

It's one thing to get used to wandering around the living areas, but the crucial room to me is right below the saloon (the engine room) and I believe you must be particularly vigilant in the first 100 hours of operation as that is the most likely time for any factory imperfections or incomplete systems installations to reveal themselves. Part of the fun of owning a new boat is getting to break her in and watch how she comes into her own. Any new boat owner will tell you that this is a labor of love as you continually learn, fine tune and tweak every detail of your yacht to make it just right.

Frank and I discussed what to look for in the engine room and I suggested an hourly visitation at minimum. Sight and smell items are easily to track. With ear muffs on you can't be as acute with sound, but you can surely hear when a new system comes on line (like the hydraulic alternator) or a system is shut down (like the wing engine). The 62 may not have the standing headroom that is so nice on our newer designs, but there are several very comfortable places to sit and observe – which in many ways is more comfortable. I like to do just that. It's almost meditative getting tuned in to the heart and soul of the boat. I have found that an infrared temperature gun is a great tool to travel with. Point the laser and pull the trigger and it gives you a digital temperature readout. My first ER visit was spent like a Friday night cowboy, shooting up the room, looking at

all of the key components to get a sense of temperature. I used my red sharpie pen and made 1/8" dots where I wanted to track temperatures and then typed up an excel "Engine Temperature Watch" spread sheet so that Frank, Dick and I could all be tracking temperature values on each engine room check. (Please email me if you would like to receive a copy of this temperature watch sheet – put "6234 Engine Room Temperature Watch sheet" in the subject of your email so I don't think I'm getting SPAM).

I've also gotten into the habit of traveling with a small portable label maker and after monitoring the hydraulic pressure gauges to determine "normal" I printed out some numbers to put on the dials for quick reference. I also labeled the floor frames for the stuffing box and seawater intake valve as reminders to lift them up to take a look while in the engine room.

Just after noon we arrived at the Isthmus and to our delight were the only active boat. Two of the most popular coves, Cherry and Fourth of July, each had only one boat moored – and if you didn't look at the calendar you could have sworn it was a summer day. A small commercial fishing boat was anchored where we wanted to be – on the point between these two coves, but we decided there was plenty of room for us and so prepared to anchor.

Most visitors to Catalina will check in on VHF 9 for a mooring assignment and take up one of the premade cans. Frank's philosophy is to anchor out as much as you can and this also gave us a chance to play with the hydraulic windlass. Unfortunately our push button foot switches got stuck and after several attempts we gave up trying to use our primary windlass. The secondary was still being commissioned so we went to our back up plan, which coincidentally happened to be at the back of the boat. Frank and Dick have done a lot of Northwest boating together as couples cruisers with their wives and one of their pet projects in outfitting Island Greeter was to come up with a proper stern bustle mounted rode spool that would hold 600' of 3/4" diameter line. They had a custom stainless steel unit fabricated and Frank and Dick mounted it themselves during commissioning. Wylie Hurd, project manager for the Nordhavn 62, took Frank's request for a stern launcher and designed a great stainless roller assembly for deployment and retrieval that is connected to 9' of 3/4" chain and a 47-lb. Fortress FX-85 anchor. We set the hook in 100' of water and using the stern hawser to lead to the cockpit capstan, set the hook and secured our girl. Island Greeter meet Catalina Island, your first new friend and a place you will likely come back to many times in the coming years.

Secured by 450' of rode we next launched the port and starboard flopper stoppers – more of a drill to learn than a necessity as we were still blessed by no wind and no seas, but better to be ready... who knows what might kick up in the middle of the night? Besides, we were still fresh it was a natural project to tackle. Ten minutes later we were up on the foredeck to launch the small dinghy, our "car" to take us to dinner. By 17:00 we were sitting at a table at Doug's Harbor Reef restaurant and we had a toast to a successful day and a great dinner. Back aboard arriving after nightfall we retrieved the dinghy and made sure everything was in place. After a little bit of television it was lights out.

When we had the windlass difficulties upon arrival we telephoned Russell Barber, Nordhavn's Dana Point commissioning manager, and both he and Wylie told us that if we could get the boat back in the morning they would spend Friday trying to get things operational for the weekend.

So after a quick sleep we were back at it at 03:30 to up anchor and head back to Dana Point. Frank spent the night sleeping in the wheelhouse with the anchor alarm set to alert him if we got too close to shore and he was already working with Dick pulling up the flopper stoppers when I came out rubbing my eyes. A quick jolt of coffee, and by 04:30 we were headed back home, a night start-up complete with stars in the sky and Christmas lights ashore.

By 07:00 I was doing our third engine room check while Frank and Dick were enjoying a beautiful sunrise reflecting orange which stretched across the horizon. To be at sea and see another sunrise, it is just one of the simplest satisfactions in life (although usually it indicates you are in for a long day!).

As I was finishing up my temperature watch on the starboard side, the engine rpms were reduced. We use the shifting of rpms as a way to communicate to the person in the ER to get out of the ER and so I made my way out. An alarm had come on in the pilothouse – Frank thought it was a bilge alarm so I went back to check the bilges in the ER and Dick went forward. We couldn't find anything, and after convening in the wheelhouse we weren't sure if it was a bilge alarm or the Sea Fire (fire suppression). What we later determined is that one of the SeaFire's internal sensors malfunctioned (this is a defect that we have seen before) and so the alarm was overridden and after checking all of the bottles to determine the needles were in the green, we picked our speed back up and continued on our way.

Island Greeter pulled into Dana Point by 08:45 with 50.1 hours now under her keel and a successful first shake down. I handed a punch list to Russell of little things we observed and he also helped organize the 50 hour oil change (I don't think we could have planned this any better). This was a bit of a pit stop turnaround as Frank and Dick drove to the grocery store to get some more provisions to make sure they're set for a repeat trip to Catalina leaving in the morning.

It was a fun first trip and Frank truly enjoyed finally getting off the dock and putting out to sea. He has a lot more of this lifestyle ahead of him with Debbie and I know they will be living life to the fullest. If you see Island Greeter while you are out boating be sure to give a wave. She is a glorious Nordhavn 62, a great ambassador for us and she is already living up to her name.

Jeff Merrill is a salesman in our Nordhavn Yachts Southwest sales office. He is known to spend quite a bit of time at sea with Nordhavn owners and enjoys composing these stories in the hopes that they will be helpful to others.

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