

HYDROFOILS HOVERCRAFT SESs & CATAMARANS WORLDWIDE

# CLASSIC **FAST** FERRIES

NO. 47 **DECEMBER 2012**

Prototyping in  
**Messina**

**Montreal-Québec**  
by hydrofoil



/ ENZO ANNUARIO photo

But first...

# A blast from the past



/ TIM TIMOLEON photo

**It** seems like only yesterday. Just another warm and peaceful summer's afternoon in Messina. Nothing out of the ordinary. Until now, twenty-four years later.

This September 1988 capture shows a nice line-up of hydrofoils moored at the Rodriguez shipyard. Three PT.20s, a PT.50, the tail of another PT.20 at the extreme right and an RHS 160F high and dry in the background. And there were more. All but the RHS 160F in this picture are of course since long gone.

For one reason or another (probably lack of time) the photographer did not record properly the names of the vessels. Sorry readers, but the only safe bets are the second PT.20 from left, *Freccia delle Eolie*, built in 1957, the PT.50, *Freccia del Mediterraneo* from 1963, both of which belonging to SNAV, and the RHS 160F, *Alnilam*, which entered service with Caremar in 1986.

Indeed, hydrofoils still flock to these premises, as do other fast ferries. Rodriguez carries out annual overhaul and other major maintenance and technical support on a number of vessels. And there are also new craft being developed and constructed. Most relevant to this journal are the two fully submerged hydrofoil prototypes, the first non surface-piercing hydrofoils built in Messina.

Read more about these on page 4. **CFF**

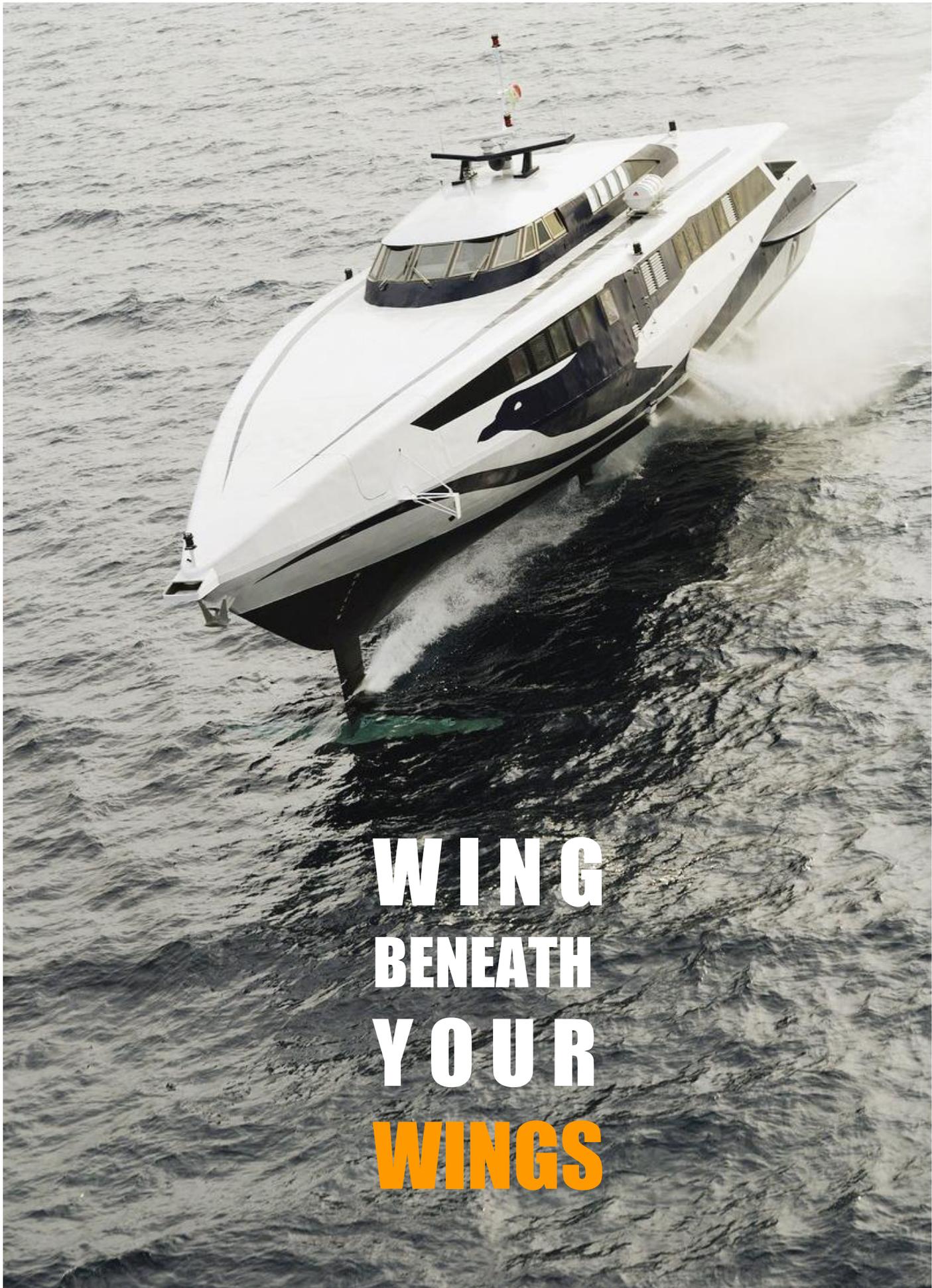
**ON THE COVER :** *The two new fully submerged hydrofoils developed and built by Rodriguez Cantieri Navali seen side by side in the Messina yard in October this year*  
/ ENZO ANNUARIO photo

## CLASSIC **FAST** FERRIES

THE ORIGINAL PERIODICAL ABOUT THE HISTORY OF HYDROFOILS, HOVERCRAFT, CATAMARANS AND SURFACE EFFECT SHIPS, THEIR BUILDERS AND OPERATORS WORLDWIDE.

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**WING  
BENEATH  
YOUR  
WINGS**

**PAGE 3 :** *The sleek Hydrofoil 1, the first fully submerged hydrofoil built by Rodriquez, in full flight during sea trials off Messina. Note the bow T-foil*  
/ RODRIQUEZ CANTIERI NAVALI photo

**I**t has been well over five years since a new hydrofoil was last delivered by Rodriquez Cantieri Navali. But this does not mean there having been no new hydrofoil development at the Messina yard. Quite the opposite.

Even before the last Foilmaster to date entered service with Ustica Lines in 2007, a new design had been on the drawing-table since the beginning of the new millennium. By far the most significant difference between this and the yard's other hydrofoils is that it features fully submerged foils, whereas previous generations were all of the surface-piercing type.

Financed by the Italian Ministry of Research, it was decided to construct two prototypes in order to acquire the necessary full scale experience to successfully put into production this next generation Rodriquez hydrofoils. Towing tank tests were carried out by the Krylov Shipbuilding Research Institute of St. Petersburg.

Both prototypes are of the fully submerged type featuring a T-shaped bow foil and aft foil with three struts incorporating the rudders. But unlike the Boeing Jetfoil which is waterjet-propelled and powered by gas turbine engines, the Rodriquez craft, like hitherto, are powered by diesel engines. However, each vessel is equipped with a different propulsion system.

The sleek, 38m twin-deck design can be fitted out for 240–280 passengers and has a cruising speed of approx. 42 knots. Corresponding figures for the Foilmaster are 31.2m, 224 passengers and 36 knots, respectively.

**Below :** *Hydrofoil 1 in Messina in 2009 sporting its initial livery and before the superstructure on bridge deck was extended*  
/ LORENZO BONASERA photo



The first of the two prototypes, *Hydrofoil 1*, was launched in 2008 and is equipped with traditional shaft propellers. The second unit, not surprisingly called *Hydrofoil 2*, has a pod propulsion system with pulling counter rotating propellers. The vessel is structurally complete at Rodriquez but has yet to be launched.

### *Hydrofoil 1*

Conversely, extensive sea trials have been carried out in the Straits of Messina with *Hydrofoil 1* and these should by now have been finalised. The trials verified the project's goal of, for example, better seakeeping in high sea states and consequently greater passenger comfort and lower resistance in foilborne mode and thus lower fuel consumption in comparison with the surface-piercing hydrofoil. Also, the resistance in hullborne mode is lower

allowing for a higher speed, approx. 25 knots compared to approx. 15 knots for the surface-piercing craft. The design takes off at around 27 knots.

To simulate a full load condition of 240 passengers, the vessel was loaded with water tanks for the trials. While the design service speed of 42 knots was confirmed, the expected maximum speed of 45 knots was not reached. It is believed that this will be achieved on the second unit which features the pod propulsion system.

Since it was launched, the superstructure on bridge deck on *Hydrofoil 1*, as is evident in the photos, has been extended in accordance with the initial design drawings. In this connection, prior to the main sea tests, the livery was changed from a simple and becoming cream white to a perhaps more striking appearance of a brighter white and sporting a large seagull on its wing on each side.



**Above :** *The slender lines of Hydrofoil 1 are convincing and the fully submerged foil system is clearly visible in this view*  
/ RODRIQUEZ CANTIERI NAVALI photo

### **Earlier attempts**

This is not the first time that the Rodriquez yard is dealing with the fully submerged hydrofoil technology.

Already in the mid-1960s Carlo Rodriquez, son of the founder of the Leopoldo Rodriquez Shipyard, appreciated the prospective competition from the big American companies of Boeing, General Motors and Grumman which

were all interested in adding to their aircraft business the production, on a grand scale, of the fully submerged hydrofoil, civil as well as military. Negotiations between Rodriquez and Grumman went on for a year, but Carlo Rodriquez felt his yard would only act as Grumman's right-hand man with no influence on design changes, etc., and the plans for an alliance with the Americans were dropped.



**Above :** Hydrofoil 2 under construction at Rodriquez in September 2008.  
 Compare with photo below and on the cover taken earlier this year  
 / AGOSTINO FERRANDINO photo

Some years later Rodriquez turned to Boeing to build military hydrofoils of the fully submerged type developed by Boeing for, initially, the Italian Navy. Having formed a joint venture, Alinavi, made up of the Rodriquez yard, Boeing and a third party of Italcantieri, the Italian Government commissioned six craft of what was to be called the Sparviero class fast attack hydrofoil. Built not in Messina but in La Spezia in north-western Italy, the first of these was launched in 1973. There was also talk about setting up a production of the commercial Boeing Jetfoil in Italy for the European market.

More recently, when the Maximum Efficiency Craft, MEC, was being developed by Rodriquez it was to have been built in two variants. When launched in 1992, the 25m MEC 1 prototype was equipped with surface-piercing W-foils for the initial trials and the plan was to replace these with a fully submerged foil system when these trials had been completed before entering upon a batch production,

including the larger fully submerged MEC 3. None of these projects eventuated and only the prototype MEC 1 was realized. In stead, Rodriquez focused on developing the Foilmaster.

#### Commercial service

At present it is uncertain when one or both of the new fully submerged prototypes will be tested commercially in regular service. Unfortunately the global cash flow could be better and times do not spur to new investment or ideas, a situation which of course has been going on for a number of years. Everyone, including Rodriquez, is cutting back on expenses. It should be safe to assume, though, that when it happens the hydrofoil(s) will be leased to or acquired by an existing operator with sufficient experience in operating fast ferries and with back-up craft should it prove necessary. **CFF**

/ ENZO ANNUARIO photo

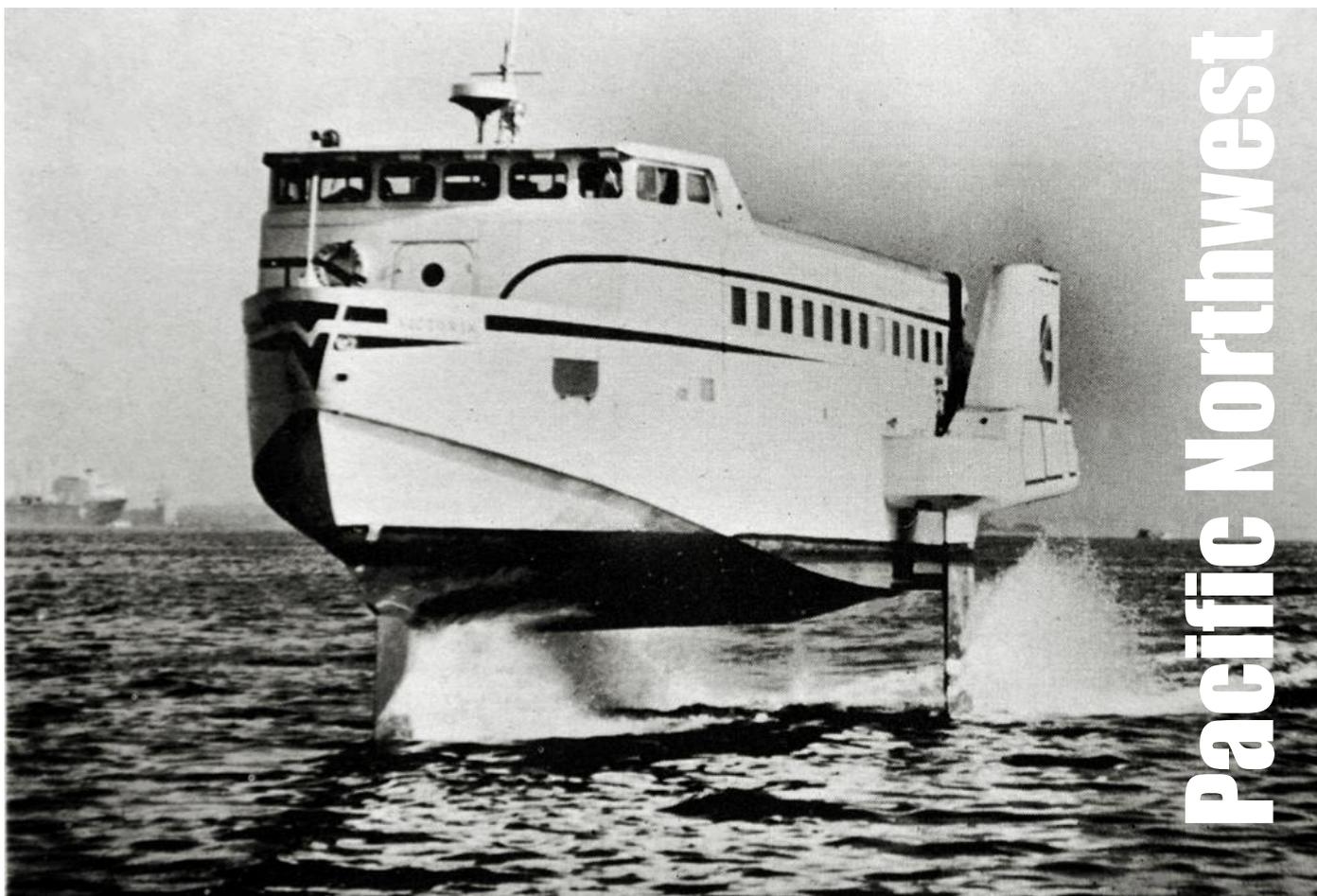


*I*t was not just in Europe that the interest for the commercial hydrofoil began to take off in the 1960s. For instance, one area in which several attempts have been made over the years to establish a hydrofoil service is in North America's Pacific Northwest, linking Seattle, WA in the U.S. and Victoria and Vancouver in British Columbia, Canada. Five services, all of which rather short-lived, were operated over a span of twenty years between 1965 and 1985, using four different vessels.

It should be said, however, that since 1986 catamarans have been running successfully on the international Seattle–Victoria route.

### The pioneers

Already in 1961 Northwest Hydrofoil Lines, based in Seattle, was planning on introducing two hydrofoils in the Puget Sound and north to Vancouver Island. It was not until four years later that the service got underway and not with two but one hydrofoil, *Victoria*, designed by Gibbs and Cox and constructed by Maryland Shipbuilding & Drydock. It is interesting to note that this builder was on the opposite side of the United States, in Baltimore.



# Pacific Northwest hydrofoils

With a length overall of just under 20m, *Victoria* featured a fully submerged foil system of canard configuration and was powered by a pair of LM100 gas turbines.

A total of 75 passengers would be carried in aircraft-style seats in one saloon. At a designed cruising speed of 37 knots, the 74-nautical mile Seattle to Victoria, Vancouver Island route was scheduled at 90 minutes. This was a worthy competitor to the airlines, when ground time to/from the airports is included, but it would appear *Victoria* used closer to two hours to cover the distance. Still, it was much faster than the up to five hour travel time on the conventional ferries on the route. Also, the fare of \$8-\$10 one way on the hydrofoil was less than that charged by the airline companies.

As is always the case with a single vessel operation with no backup available, cancellations of services are almost inevitable and thus fatal to the operator as such immediately produce bad publicity. Northwest Hydrofoil Lines was no exception and following an incident where *Victoria* hit a log in the Puget Sound resulting in one of the foils being knocked off the service was terminated altogether later in 1965.

*The first hydrofoil introduced between Seattle and Vancouver Island, in 1965, was Victoria*

Flying Princess  
was briefly  
operated in the  
Pacific Northwest  
prior to being  
shipped to P&O  
Ferries in the U.K.  
/ BMS photo



*Victoria* was subsequently relocated south to operate between Los Angeles and Catalina Island. This operation also lasted for only a few months, in the summer of 1969. The vessel is believed to have been scrapped sometime during the 1980s.

#### You've got to try it

It would be another eleven years before the next hydrofoil appeared in the area. From mid-September to early-

November 1976 a Boeing Marine Systems 929-100 Jetfoil, *Flying Princess*, was demonstrated on the Seattle–Victoria route prior to the vessel being shipped overseas to operate with P&O Ferries between London and Zeebrugge, Belgium.

*Flying Princess* accommodated 224 passengers on two decks in an arrangement similar to that of a wide-body aircraft. The main deck saloon seated 136 and the upper 88, all in one-class.

The test-market operation on the Seattle–Victoria route

*Flying Princess II appeared on the Seattle–Victoria run on two occasions, in 1978 and 1980*  
/ RICK HAWKINSON photo



was a collaboration between Boeing, the British Columbia government and Georgian Gulf Cruises, the latter of which was the operating company. The six-week trial service was successful with almost 18,600 passengers carried on eighty-eight flights. Only two trips were lost due to fog: mechanical reliability of the craft was one-hundred percent. Passenger satisfaction as to the quality of the ride was likewise high.

Marketed as 'You've got to try it', one daily round trip was operated during the period, leaving Seattle at 0900 and Victoria at 1730 (September 17–October 1) or 1630 (October 2–November 1). Scheduled travel time was 1 hour 50 minutes. Adult fares were \$16 one way and \$30 round trip, children up to 11 years were half price.

Following its charter to P&O Ferries in the U.K., *Flying Princess* was leased to Spanish operator Trasmediterránea in 1980, renamed *Princesa Voladora* and as such operated in the Canary Islands for about a year. It was back with Boeing in 1981, only to be sold to Far East Hydrofoil in Hong Kong that same year and renamed *Urzela*.

### The second Princess...

Two years on, in the summer of 1978, another Jetfoil demonstration was carried out. This time by the Washington State Department of Transportation/ Washington State Ferries which leased 929-100 *Flying Princess II*, built that same year, from BMS to operate various commuter routes in the Seattle vicinity as well as north to Port Angeles and Friday Harbor (both WA) and the international route to Victoria, BC. It was hoped that these trial commuter services would prove that there was a market for introducing, on a permanent basis, passenger-only fast sea transportation to ease the pressure on the conventional ferries and roads.

In retrospect, this appears to have been a too ambitious, or jumbly if you like, project as none of the services was operated for long enough during the seven-week period to become known to the public and interesting to prospective users. None the less, a survey concluded the public being highly in favour of a State operated hydrofoil service.

Some 66,000 passengers were carried on a total of 437 flights. Reliability was 97.8 percent. One of the few mechanical mishaps was that of debris clogging the Jetfoil's waterjet pump system on a departure from Victoria resulting in passengers having to be returned to Seattle on a conventional ferry.

### ...times two

Two years later still, *Flying Princess II* was back on the Seattle to Victoria run. Chartered by BMS to British Columbia Steamship and a purpose-formed company called Flying Princess Transportation Corporation, the 250-seat Jetfoil was operated from mid-May to mid-November 1980. In the spring and fall seasons two daily round trips were operated. An early morning departure from Seattle at 0600, returning from Victoria at 0830 and an afternoon crossing from Seattle at 1600 and back from Victoria at 1830. During the peak summer months a third round trip was added in between these.

Again, craft reliability was very good; 98 percent. In the region of 1,000 services were carried out, carrying a total of 135,000 passengers. The average load factor was 53 percent, while a peak load factor of 80 percent was reached in August.

/ DAVE WILKIE photo



### That's the spirit

So far the last attempt on running a scheduled hydrofoil service in the Pacific Northwest, at least which has gone beyond the planning stage, happened in 1985. However, already in the fall of 1982 it was announced that a Canadian-based company, Island Jetfoil Corporation, had been formed to introduce a Jetfoil service the following Easter linking Seattle, Victoria and Vancouver on the Canadian mainland. A 929-115, to be named *Island Jetfoil One*, was even prepared by BMS but later went to another customer

A significant difference of the Island Jetfoil operation as compared to the previous ones was that it would be permanent and run year-round. Another was that the craft, *Spirit of Friendship*, was of the second generation Jetfoil hydrofoils, designated 929-115, also known as Block II craft. It was launched at the Boeing Marine Systems plant at Renton, just outside Seattle, in January 1985. It was not an entirely new vessel though, having originally been delivered to Argentinian hydrofoil operator Alimar, as *Montevideo Jet*, in 1980. The service on the River Plate did not last long and the vessel was back with Boeing the following year, was

renamed *Aries* and as such acted as BMS's demonstrator until sold to Island Jetfoil.

Sporting a striking blue, red and white livery, *Spirit of Friendship* entered service in March, 1985. Originally two daily round trips were offered between Seattle and Victoria and one between Victoria and Vancouver. Departures were 0700 and 1200 from Seattle and 0930 and 1930 from Victoria (to Seattle) with the mainland service leaving Victoria at 1430 and Vancouver at 1700. Scheduled quay-to-quay journey times on both stretches were 2 hours. However, the timetable was altered during the summer and trip times were reduced to 1 hour 45 minutes. Fares were also lowered, considerably so on the Victoria-Vancouver leg. This would prove to be the beginning of the end as Island Jetfoil closed down not long thereafter.

Following the collapse of Island Jetfoil, *Spirit of Friendship* was bought back by Boeing at auction in September 1986 and eventually sold in Japan in January 1987 where it entered service with Jet Line as *Jet 7*. It has since been sold on to Tokai Kisen and renamed *Seven Island Ai*

### Planning it is half the fun

In the fall of 1997 it was reported that a pair of Jetfoils in service in Hong Kong with Far East Hydrofoil were likely to be transferred to Canada to operate the Vancouver-Victoria route in cooperation with Clipper Navigation, the company which had operated catamarans between the U.S. and Canada since 1986. These plans were never carried into effect.

There have been other fast ferry services between Vancouver Island and the mainland, at least one of which we have reported on in past issues of *CFF*. We may come back to these at a later date. **CFF**



We wish readers  
**Happy Holidays** & to see  
you all back in **2013!**

**Next CFF** scheduled for mid-January.

**Roger Kenner is an avid amateur cyclist living in Canada. He sets out on bike rides most would get a sore behind just thinking about doing. For instance, in the summer 2002 Roger decided to pedal from his home in Montreal, Quebec eastward to St. John, New Brunswick. But first he took his bicycle on one of the now defunct Les Dauphins' Voskhod hydrofoils to Quebec City**

# By bike by hydrofoil

by Roger Kenner

**It** was hard to come up with a fitting sequel to the 11-day Montreal to Niagara Falls ride I had taken in 2001. It had been so exciting, however, that I strongly felt the need to repeat the experience. Eastward was the only direction left from Montreal that I had not yet explored by bicycle: I had gone north to Mont Laurier in 1998, south to New York in 2000, and west to Niagara in 2001.

The core of my plans was the bike trail from Rivière-du-loup to Edmunston, which I had newly heard about. Then I remembered my promise to myself at Quebec City, in 1990, that I would continue on down the road towards Montmagny and beyond. Once I would reach Edmunston, the descent of the St. John's River to the sea seemed a natural extension of the ride, and would give it about the same scope as my ride of the previous year.

The only piece of the puzzle not yet in place was the Montreal to Quebec City stretch, over which I had ridden in 1990. I did not think I had the extra days to cycle that way again. I was resigned to the hassle of putting my bike on the train when the billboards for the Les Dauphins hydrofoil service caught my eye. This seemed a natural. All was in place.

**Below :** Two of Les Dauphin's five Voskhods, Polina III and Corona Borealis at Trois Rivières, Quebec. The former came upriver from Quebec City heading for Montreal and passengers getting off or on in Trois Rivières had to do so via the other hydrofoil. Note the bicycles  
/ ROGER KENNER photo



## Up with the lark

I was up at 05:00 on the morning of my departure. My boat to Quebec City was slated to leave at 07:30, but I knew I wanted to get there early so as to be one of the first in line. I was concerned about how my bicycle would be handled and I was sure I wanted to get a good seat!

Sheryl, my dear wife, got up with me in the early, just-after-dawn darkness, to prepare me a nice breakfast while I got everything ready. I had prepared my gear and packed up my bicycle the day before. After a parting photo out front, I was on my way at 06:00.

I set off in the cool early morning, taking my usual route to the Old Port: Along the deMaisonneuve Bike Trail to Decarie, over to St. Jacques, down the hill to St. Henri, across St. Henri to the Lachine Canal, and finally east along the Canal. When I reached the dock at the Old Port at 06:45, I was the only one there.

The hydrofoil was docked at the quay, but it was quite deserted. The floating dock offered no easy place to park the bike, so I had to carefully lean it up against the chain which served as guardrail near the entrance to the quay. I stood at the entrance and waited impatiently.

Finally, I decided to use the waiting time to begin unloading my bike and arranging the gear as best I could for carry on. I had no idea what the loading procedure would be, but I felt sure the bike would have to be as empty as possible. I also felt safer with the unloaded bike laying on its side rather than having the loaded one leaning against the chain, where it seemed ready to drop into the water at any moment.

## First in line

By 07:00, a couple of other passengers had arrived and had taken their place in line behind me. I still had no idea how things would go. As soon as some people arrived at the

nearby kiosk, I left the line and went over to inquire about the loading procedure. It was a good thing I did so, for I found that despite my reservation and payment by phone, I would still need the ticket and boarding pass that was awaiting me there in an envelope.

Armed with my documentation, I returned to the line, which now had about twenty people in it. Despite some awkward glances, I resumed my original position at the head of the line. Other cyclists had collected by this time as well, and were also waiting near the head of the line with their bicycles.

At length, I saw another hydrofoil coming in to dock. The one which had been docked there all along was just for show. As soon as the new boat was tied up and most of the crew had left to go over to the kiosk, the remaining boat crew came to get our bicycles. I was glad, for I had worried that I would have to wait outside while boarding was proceeding, in order to deal with the bicycle, and thus lose my chance at a good seat. As it was, the crew member just grabbed up my bike, without formality, and secured it with bungee cords to the top deck. Within five minutes he had stowed all ten or so bicycles, and we all remained standing in line. As the line lengthened to hold a hundred or more people, growing ever more impatient, the crew continued to shuffle back and forth between the kiosk and the boat. I saw some bringing a set of large coffee thermoses. I guessed they did not have any coffee-making capability on board.

At length, all was ready, and one of the young crew came to the head of the line to take tickets. I had to move fast to get a choice seat. I took only the most valuable part of my gear, leaving the rest behind on the dock. As it was, although I was the second one into the boat, I still had to race to get one of the two front row seat

**Right :** *Main saloon on Cassiopea II, one of Les Dauphin's five 68-seat Voskhod hydrofoils / MADOKA LEBLOND photo*



**Right :** Corona Borealis  
alongside at Trois Rivières.  
Time for passengers and  
crew to stretch their legs  
and perhaps have a smoke

**Below :** Polina III making  
the reverse journey from  
Quebec City to Montreal  
arrives in Trois Rivières  
/ ROGER KENNER photo, both



### Finally on board

The hydrofoil had two passenger sections. In the back section, where the side entrance was, were a dozen or so rows, with seats on either side of a centre aisle. A small corridor led around the driver's area to a forward section much smaller than the main cabin. There were only three rows, each one with fewer seats than the one behind. The floor sloped up sharply to the front row, which had only two seats on either side of the aisle. There was nothing in front of these forward seats except for a flat space and the front windows.

I raced up and dumped my things on the right-hand seats. The passengers who had boarded just before me grabbed the other side. I then had to fight my way back through the stream of still-boarding passengers in order to

retrieve the rest of my gear, left behind on the quay. I had to make two additional trips, pushing through the crowd, in order to gather everything. It filled the seat next to me, the floor at my feet, and a good part of the open space in front of me. (Thankfully the boat was not full.) Despite the fact that I was taking up two seats, my whole corner was hardly larger than an aircraft washroom.

Once settled, I waited patiently for our departure, which seemed to take a long while. Finally we were off at 07:35. I was excited as we backed away from the dock and swung slowly to leave the protected harbour area. My front seat vantage point provided an absolutely wonderful view! It was well worth all the effort I had expended to make certain I got it

## Another point of view

The first few minutes of the trip mirrored earlier rides I had taken on the Longueuil ferry: We went out of the protected harbour and into the swift and strong St. Mary's current, past the Molson plant, and underneath the Jacques Cartier Bridge. The difference this time was the speed with which we were travelling. By the time we had reached the bridge, the boat was going full throttle and the hull had already left the water. The choppy feeling of the current was replaced by an eerie smoothness, coupled with the jet-engine whine of the engines. As I watched the shoreline, objects seemed to move past as speeds similar to what I would expect when viewing them from a car on the highway.

Very quickly we were past the Longueuil marina, the furthest downriver I had ever traveled by boat. I was seeing all the familiar landmarks, but now from a river vantage point, as I had never seen them before. I saw the upcoming narrows, under which passed the Lafontaine Tunnel. We passed the beginning of the Port of Montreal, located at the foot of St. Jean Baptiste in Pointe-aux-Trembles. I saw the Boucherville Islands from an entirely new angle, and then the Islands were behind us and we came upon the familiar Verchères shoreline.

It was 07:55 when we passed Repentigny, at a reported speed of 60 km/h

As I paused from being transfixed by the scenery, I took a moment to check out more closely the boat which would be my home for the next four hours. I saw that all of the fixed markings were in Russian or Ukrainian! Only the more recent, additional signage was in English and French. I took a walk around and got the view out of the open side door, whence I could see the wake thrown up by the bow planes upon which the hydrofoil was riding. There was an opening to the upper, outside deck atop the stairs at the back of the main cabin, but this was roped off so that passengers could not go there.

We overtook a large freighter and I saw the huge bow wave generated by this behemoth. When we hit waves such

as these, the hydrofoil would bounce vigorously.

## From Russia with love

As we rode along, our young crew made announcements over the PA system, giving us historical vignettes about the St. Lawrence, along with some information on the vessel. I learned that the boats were made in Russia and the model was called the Voskhod II. Les Dauphins had five of them and the one I was riding on was called *Corona Borealis*.

The Russian crew consisted of driver and the engine-room attendant. These, I would learn, spoke no French and only a smattering of English. Our service crew consisted of two young French-Canadians, a young man and a young girl. The young girl took care of the cabin service. Over the course of my voyage, I would order two coffees at \$2 each. I had to abstain from the cookies and other treats they were selling.

We reached the familiar shoreline of Sorel at 08:40, one hour and five minutes into the trip. I caught a quick glimpse up the Richelieu River and saw the Sorel ferry as we passed it by. Then, as we headed out to Lac St. Pierre, the sky began to cloud over.

I had never imagined that the path ships had to follow through Lac St. Pierre was so tortured and convoluted. As we sped along, we turned to and fro along the narrow pathway marked out by buoys and lights. In some cases, we passed by only a few hundred feet rocks that were protruding from the water. I guess the lake is actually quite shallow. At length, off in the distance, I began to see the familiar outline of the bridge at Three Rivers.

We reached Three Rivers at 9:35, where we pulled up and stopped at the Old Waterfront. Since the pier was much higher than the boat, we all had the chance to exit through the back, and out onto the main deck. We were promised half an hour's rest at Three Rivers. Soon a second boat approached, the one heading upriver from Quebec. It tied up alongside our own and passengers exited across the deck of our boat to the dock.

**Right :** *Corona Borealis* shortly after arrival in Quebec City, the terminus for the hydrofoil but certainly not for the author  
/ ROGER KENNER  
photo



While we were waiting, I saw the Russian boat crews out on the deck taking a smoke. I approached them to try and strike up a conversation, but I discovered I could speak to them in neither French nor English. Their French was zero. In English, they could respond only with a few isolated words. I have no idea how the service crew ever communicated with the boat crew.

Looking across the river with my field glasses, I explored the shoreline I had cycled along back in 1990, on my way to Quebec City. On the way into Three Rivers, just before passing under the bridge, I had noted the mouth of the Nicolet River, which had figured also in that bike trip.

We were all on our way again at 10:00. First the Montreal boat re-boarded, untied, and departed. Then, it was our turn.

### **Better late than never**

Just below Three Rivers we passed by the Gentilly nuclear plant, but the sky was very dark, making it hard to get a photo. At 10:35 we passed Deschaillons, where I had stayed overnight on the second night of my 1990 ride to Quebec. I looked for and finally found the pier to which I had taken my evening walk back then, but it was not possible to get a good photo.

Turning the corner from Deschaillons, the St. Lawrence opens up into a fairly large basin, just west of the Quebec City Bridge. We reached this point at 11:25 and began to encounter big waves, waves such as one would see on the ocean. At foillborne speed, the front of the boat bounces terribly when hitting waves. All of my gear, stowed up front,

began to bounce completely off the counter. Suddenly, the boat slowed to normal speed and settled back down into the water. Now we were chugging along at the still respectable speed of 15-20 knots, but it seemed like a snail's pace. The shoreline objects, which had been moving past as if seen from the highway, were now stationary objects.

I began to worry about just how late we would be. The driver tried several times to ramp up the speed, only to have to slow down again because it was too choppy. Only as we neared the bridge and the river narrowed again was he able to resume normal speed. Mercifully, we would end up arriving only half an hour late, at 12:30 instead of the expected 12:00.

Passing under the historic Quebec City Bridge, as well as approaching Cap Diamant from the river, were new and exciting experiences. I had never seen the Citadel before from the vantage point of those it was built to defend against. It made for quite an impressive fortress!

We docked at the Port of Quebec, near the locks leading to the inner harbour. Once my bike was off-loaded, it took me a few minutes to re-pack my gear. I was done at 12:45 and called Sheryl to let her know I had gotten to Quebec safely. **CFF**

*To learn more about the actual bicycle ride from Quebec City to St. John, or any other of Roger's bike excursions, visit <http://rogerkenner.ca>*

**Below :** All five Voskhods belonging to Les Dauphins seen laid up in Montreal in 2006. From left to right: Vega I, Cassiopea II, Polina III, Sirius I and Corona Borealis. Reportedly, not all of them entered service on the Montreal-Quebec City route. The vessels were still sitting on the quay in 2010 but were gone earlier this year.

*Les Dauphins operated during the summer months 2000 – 2005.*

/ RICHARD SEVILLE photo



Last but not least ...



/ TIM TIMOLEON photo

**The next best thing** to be admiring a hydrofoil underway is to to admire it from underneath. Risking being accused of improper statement in a forum such as this one, in some respects sitting on dry land the hydrofoil is looking its best.

Here, then, is another nice collection of hydrofoils from days gone by for you to enjoy (also see page 2).

On the slipway in this 1992-view from the Alilauro maintenance yard in Napoli are Alilauro/Volaviamare's Kolkhida *Aligea* and Aliscafi SNAV's PT.50 *Freccia di Casamicciola*. The Kolkhida, built in 1987, is one of only two still listed as being active with the operator, whereas the PT.50 was retired long ago.

Also in the yard idling in the mid-day sun tranquility were quite a few other Kolkhida and Kometa hydrofoils belonging to Alilauro, some of which are seen here. Over the years, from the early 1970s, Alilauro and associated companies have operated some 15 units of these two designs.

*Freccia di Casamicciola* was originally delivered by Rodriquez to Norwegian operator Hardanger Sunnhordlandske D/S as *Teisten* in 1970 but was in fact intended for SNAV. Following the grounding and subsequent write-off the previous year of HSD's PT.20 carrying the same name, the contract for the PT.50 was however taken over by the Norwegians. The hydrofoil made the delivery trip from Messina to Bergen under its own power and remained with HSD for sixteen years. It was acquired by Simon Møkster, a shipping firm based in Stavanger, and renamed *Strilprins* in 1987 and was again sold to another domestic company the following year and renamed *Hinnavåg* was used as a crewboat between Stavanger and an oil rig construction site for a short period of time.

It was back in Italy by late 1988 – however, this time not making the journey on its own steam – and entered service with SNAV in the Bay of Naples in 1989. **CFF**