

January 3, 2012

Splendid Isolation – a reprint from the Nordhavn Dreamers list and John Marshall of *Serendipity*

By Jeff Merrill

There is a Yahoo users group called “Nordhavn Dreamers” dedicated to those who aspire to one day set off to sea in their own Nordhavn. This group is very active and is comprised of both Nordhavn wannabes as well as past and present Nordhavn owners. It is managed by Callum McCormick who does a great job as moderator. I find the threads to be very interesting and informative and PAE president Dan Streech frequently posts responses to various topics being discussed by the group. (It’s easy to sign up. Just go to groups.yahoo.com and search Nordhavn Dreamers.)

Among the more active Nordhavn owners is John Marshall from Washington who owns a Nordhavn 55. John will chime in on almost every topic and his views are highly regarded. John’s 55 is called *Serendipity*, which is appropriate in many ways, and I got to know him during commissioning as I was working with another 55 owner going through the process at the same time. On December 3rd John wrote about “Splendid Isolation” and with John’s permission I have re-posted this reply for all to enjoy:

From: NordhavnDreamers@yahoogroups.com [mailto:NordhavnDreamers@yahoogroups.com]
On Behalf Of John Marshall
Sent: Saturday, December 03, 2011 8:40 AM
To: NordhavnDreamers@yahoogroups.com
Subject: [NordhavnDreamers] Splendid isolation

The discussion of log books and technologies to keep them made me think again of why I have a boat.

The good news is that log books aren't required for recreational boaters, so keeping them is a matter of personal preference. I know some Nordhavn owners who keep them, but others who don't keep any records of their travels other than memories.

The longer I own a boat, the more I lean toward simple solutions. A pad of paper is infinitely better than a keyboard.

While some people cruise around watching Fox News 24 hours a day, staying stressed out and connected to the minutiae of modern living, for me, the true pleasure of boating is to become as close to being one with the sea and the elements and the wild coastlines I travel along and the wildlife as possible. Anything that spoils that sense of splendid isolation and remoteness is a negative.

I love having a strong, capable boat under me and the best navigational electronics and charts and some good tunes to listen to, but beyond that, being connected to land is too much like being on land.

I cruise on my Nordie to escape the land and everything that ties me to it, other than perhaps my anchor chain leading to the bottom. The sea is always sane and largely unchanged over time. The rugged coastlines of western BC and Alaska are little different now than they were thousands of years ago.

There is a calmness at sea that one can absorb into their soul. Even a storm at sea has its own beauty and order and cadence, and one that we have no influence over. We endure... or not.

Less is more is my motto.

But like everything else, people buy and own boats for many different reasons. Mine is to be with the people I love, and for us to be as alone as it is possible to be on this Earth.

An expedition-grade boat like a Nordie is a passport to that splendid isolation.

There is no way on Earth to be more alone and closer to nature than you can be on the sea.

John M
N55#20 Serendipity
Sequim Bay, WA

It is one thing to plan and calculate and picture yourself “some day” going out cruising on your own Nordhavn. Actually doing it and then reflecting upon why you do it can only be accomplished much further down the curve of experience. Thanks John, for your summary observation, I think you have given all of us a lot to think about.

Here's to a great 2012 for *Serendipity* and crew!



Jeff Merrill is a Nordhavn salesman from CA who travels the world to be out at sea and enjoys reading about others who share their adventures.

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