

HISTORY of ESCAPADE  
told by the first owner Alastair Macleod.

The present Owner purchased ESCAPADE, new, from the builders in July 1972. Moonraker Marine International was a subsidiary of J.C.L. Marine until purchased by the C.E.O. of Lotus Cars who developed the Company for line production of the vessel. Based on a design by a leading U.K. naval architect it was offered with various lay-outs - aft cabin or open aft cockpit, optional flying bridge, various engine options and so on.

This version has the aft owner's cabin with double berth and toilet and shower. In the main cabin another toilet and shower, a second double berth (convertible from the dining area), and further sleeping accommodation for two in a vee berth forward, which can be curtained off for privacy. The galley area in the main cabin has a cooking oven with two gas rings and a separate sink. A high output, shore powered, air conditioning unit provides more than adequate cooling for the entire forward area.

The Owner initially based the boat in a South East England marina and used it often on cross Channel trips to cruise the French and Belgian coasts and Channel Islands as well as to explore the French canals.

The most noteworthy experience he had in this period arose from being caught out in one of the sudden gales that develop in the English Channel whilst on passage from Cherbourg to Dover. The gale reached force 9/10 and he was at the wheel for 12 hours before gaining shelter in Dover harbour. Whereas it was an experience no. one would choose it proved the seaworthiness of the boat, however uncomfortable and disagreeable it proved to be!

In 1973 the Owner moved to Hongkong and had ESCAPADE follow him out, transported on the deck of a containership. Because of the very restricted area accessible at the time it was, use of the boat in terms of hours under power was very limited, but it provided essential escape at weekends from the claustrophobic and appallingly overcrowded atmosphere of the Colony by short trips along the coastline of the New Territories to the many secluded anchorages that abound in the inlets and islands in that area, plus the odd trip through mainland Chinese waters to Macau.

ESCAPADE survived several typhoons moored to one of the free swinging 'typhoon moorings' that the authorities there require all marinas to provide for resident boats if the particular marina is not constructed to standards allowing them to remain in their regular berths under such conditions.

In 1985 the boat was once again moved by containership to Miami when the Owner's area of responsibility was transferred to overseeing company activities in the Americas which required his frequent presence in the States.

Whilst based in Miami the boat was operated under a series of cruising permits, cruising the Keys and, when the opportunity presented itself, the Bahamas. Once again, however, circumstances were such that although used regularly operating hours were very low in relation to the time it spent there.

In 1991, once again due to business requirements the much travelled boat was again moved (this time by road) to Lake Lanier after first having been officially imported into the United States.

In summary, because of attendant circumstances, the engine hours consumed are extremely low in relation to the age of the boat.

Built at a time when builders were not pre-occupied with lightweight construction, the hull is of much heavier construction than is normal in more recent plastic hull yachts so that blistering and other problems have not arisen (see comments in survey). Although much could be done by an enthusiastic owner with the time to do it - to correct cosmetic wear and tear from the passage of time, it is a very well found and well engined vessel. The Perkins diesel is internationally known and the present Owner has never had any problem in obtaining servicing and spares support when required, wherever the boat has been.